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A SERMON

BY REV. PAUL COFFIN, D.D.

1762.

AND AN ADDRESS

BY CYRUS WOODMAN.

1886.

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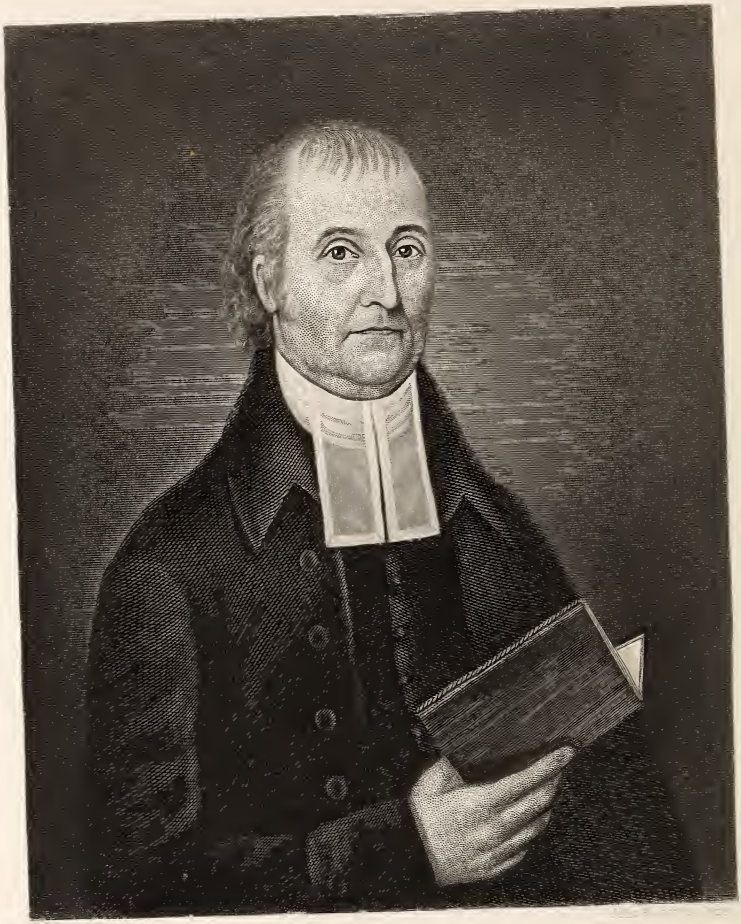

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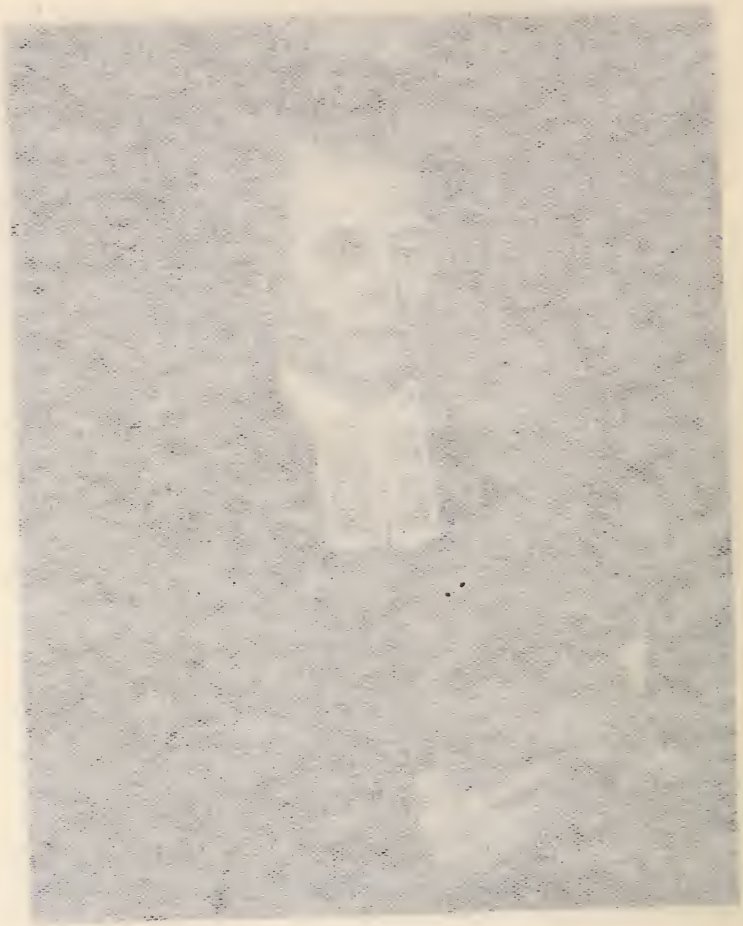

A SERMON

BY

REV. PAUL COFFIN, D.D.

PREACHED AUGUST 15, 1762

IN NARRAGANSET No. 1, NOW BUXTON, MAINE

AND

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED THERE AUGUST 15, 1886

BY

CYRUS WOODMAN

CAMBRIDGE
JOHN WILSON AND SON
University Press
1888

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PREFACE.

I READ a sermon and delivered an address in the South Congregational Meeting-house in my native town of Buxton, Maine, on Sunday, the 15th of August, 1886.

The circumstances which led to my appearance before the congregation assembled on that occasion are stated, on a subsequent page, in my remarks introductory to the reading of the sermon.

A bright sun and a clear sky, a serene air and a mild temperature, made the day itself delightful. The usual Sabbath exercises, the fine weather, and the novelty of the occasion combined to fill the meeting-house.

Such occasions, though of local interest merely, serve a useful purpose in reminding us of the history of the past, of the lives, labours, and condition of the early settlers of our town, of what they did for us, and what we, in our day, should do for those who are to come after us. They tend, too, to strengthen the ties which bind us to the place of our birth, to excite the spirit of patriotism, to bring home to us the worth of our civil and

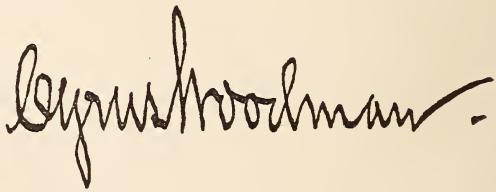
religious institutions, and to stimulate us, if need be, to die in their defence.

Animated by these thoughts and by the hope of doing something towards exciting and perpetuating an interest in the history of the town and of the first organized church, I prepared my address and now cause it to be printed. Let it stand as an evidence of my loyalty to the place of my birth and of my respect for its people; some of whom at least, I trust, will find it not altogether devoid of interest and instruction.

It will, at least, serve to refresh the recollections of those who heard me, and to remind them of a charming day and of a scene and an anniversary which they will, I hope, long hold in pleasant memory.

The usual services of the day were conducted by the pastor, the Rev. George W. Johnson, with the exception that he kindly allowed me to read a sermon instead of preaching one himself.

The address was delivered after the benediction and a short recess.



Cambridge, Mass.,
February 16, 1888.

REMARKS

INTRODUCTORY TO THE READING OF THE SERMON.

IT is proper, I think, for me to explain why I, a layman, stand before you in this pulpit to-day.

It has been known to some of my friends for several years that I have in my possession the first sermon which was preached on this spot. Last May I was surprised by a letter which informed me that arrangements were making for the reading of that sermon here, by myself, in June. I at once replied that I could not read it then, but perhaps should be willing to do so in August. On reflection I repented of this intimation, and informed my friends that I would rather not read it, and suggested to them that it would probably be much more agreeable to the congregation if the pastor should think proper to prepare and preach a sermon with special reference to this anniversary occasion. I thought that a new sermon written and delivered by him would be more acceptable than an old one read by myself. I was informed in reply that many wanted to hear the old sermon, and to hear it read by me. I was too far committed to retreat, and finally

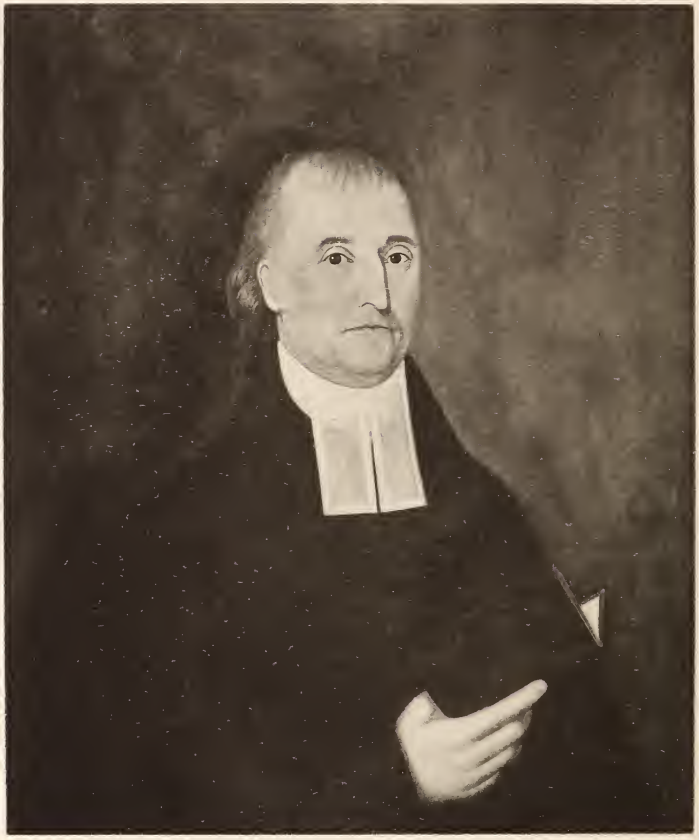
consented to read it if agreeable to the church and pastor. Their willing consent, as I am informed, has been given; and I now appear before you, though it would be much more pleasant for me if your pastor occupied my place.

The sermon which I am about to read was the first one preached in the meeting-house that was first built here, but it has no reference to the occasion upon which it was delivered. It is on Prayer. It consists of two parts from one text, — one part being delivered in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon, — and of course one part is not complete without the other. As I read only the part delivered in the forenoon, it will be hardly fair to call it the author's sermon, when in fact it is but half of it.[1]

If it shall seem to you dry and uninteresting, you may lay the fault partly to its incompleteness, partly to the youth of the writer, — then not twenty-five years old, — and partly to the rather antiquated form of the sermon, but mainly to the imperfection of my reading and to my embarrassment in appearing before you under circumstances that are so new to me.

The original sermon is now in my hand; but I read from a copy which is more legible.

[1] The whole sermon is here printed.



FORENOON SERMON.[1]

BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING: BUT IN EVERY THING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, WITH THANKSGIVING, LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN UNTO GOD. — *Philippians* iv. 6.

Q. D. [As if he had said] Be not anxious and impatiently careful for anything; let not any of your worldly Concerns distract or distress your Minds; take a prudent and moderate Care; procure such Things as are fit for your present Comfort and Support: but as God is the Sovereign Disposer of all Things, and has a tender Concern for all his Servants, see to it that you finally cast your Cares and Burdens upon him. In all your Cares and in every Business, let the Requests and Desires of your Souls be made known unto God by Prayer, giving Thanks unto him for your past and present

[1] The manuscript is full of contractions, which are here extended. The word "favour" (usually spelled "favor" in the United States) is but once written out in full, though it often appears as "Fav." I follow the author's spelling, and also his practice — the custom of his day — in generally beginning the names of all nouns with a capital letter. When by "him" and "his" he refers to the Supreme Being, he does not begin the words with capital letters.

Blessings. This is a Christian and wise Behaviour; it is but your reasonable Service, — a just Acknowledgment of the Being and Perfections, of the Providence and Grace, of the Lord of Angels and Men; it is but giving him his Due: for, as we hold All from him and expect all future Blessings from the same Source, it is but just that we pay him this Homage for what we now enjoy, and but wise and reasonable that we thus look to him for future Good and Happiness.

From the Words thus paraphrased, we infer the Duty and Necessity of praying to God, and of finally referring our Concerns to him.

In speaking to which general Truth, we shall consider the several following Propositions: —

I. The Nature of this Duty of Prayer, in general.
II. The Fitness and Reasonableness of it.
III. The Constancy and Particularity or Extent of it; and then,
IV. Say a Word of publick Prayer and Supplication; and
V. Of Family Prayer; and
VI. Of Secret Prayer.

I. Firstly, *The general Nature of Prayer is to be considered.*

Prayer in general consists in confessing to God our Wants, and desiring a Supply of them, joined with Confession of Sin, and Thanksgiving for Mercies. The Nature of Prayer, as an Address to God, will be explained and understood more fully by considering the following particular Parts of it,

which contain in Substance the Nature of the Duty, viz., *Invocation*, *Confession*, *Petition*, and *Thanksgiving*.

1. *Invocation, or Calling upon God.* By this we acknowledge that God is the only suitable Object of religious Worship and Adoration. Under this Particular we acknowledge the divine Perfection to be infinite, adoring him as worthy of all Praise and Service from Men and Angels. By this we acknowledge him as our Creator and Governour, and confess ourselves his natural and proper Subjects, and that we are indispensably bound to pay Homage to him as our King and Lord, and to observe inviolably the Laws of his Kingdom. By this, therefore, we avouch the Lord to be our God, and virtually promise our Allegiance to him. By this we express our deepest Reverence to the King of Heaven, and the amazing Distance there is between him and us, and his great Condescension in permitting us thus to approach him. By this, therefore, we confess it an undeserved Privilege to have Admittance into the divine Presence and Leave to present our Petitions to him. By thus calling upon God, we own our Need of Favour from him, and our Insufficiency to make ourselves happy without him. By this we confess ourselves dependent Creatures who, being insufficient for our own Felicity, are obliged to go from ourselves to some superior Being, in order to obtain Happiness; for calling upon another implies our own Need and Want, and therefore we do Honor to God as our Saviour and only Hope.

2. *Another Branch of Prayer is Confession of Sin.* It was observed under the former Branch of Prayer that we were bound to pay a constant Homage and Service to God; which being conscious to ourselves we have not perfectly performed, it becomes fit that we confess our Failings, and that with Grief and Shame. And as we have not only come short of strict Duty, but in many Instances actually violated those Laws which we should have observed, we must confess these our Transgressions in all their heinous and aggravated Circumstances, taking all the Shame and Guilt to ourselves, and at the same time adore his Grace and undeserved Patience with such Rebels. Under this Part of Prayer we take a Survey of the Actions of our Lives, comparing them with those Rules by which we should have been entirely governed; and wherein we find our Condition to have been irregular we take the Iniquity of it to ourselves, and lament our Folly in so doing. This Part of Prayer should always be accompanied with corresponding Affections, such as unfeigned Repentance, godly Sorrow, Humility, Self-Abhorrence, and so forth; with Purposes of a more upright Behaviour for the Future. "I have done Iniquity; I will do so no more," is the only Language which becomes a penitent Confessor. As we have, by the fore-mentioned Failures and Transgressions, forfeited all Right to Favour from God, and exposed ourselves to the Expression of his Displeasure, we penitently implore his Pardon and future Favour and Grace; which leads to say [that]

3. *Another Branch of Prayer is Petition.* But inasmuch as, by what we have but now said, it appears that we deserve no Favour from God because of our Iniquity, it seems necessary for our Encouragement in this Part of Prayer that we have Something besides our own Deserts to plead with God for his Mercy. Otherwise we must of Necessity be in very melancholy Doubt and Suspense; because it is a Matter of very great Moment that we in this Case doubt of. Now, in brief, the Ground of our Encouragement in our Petitions is the Righteousness of Christ, which is to be pleaded before God by Faith. We must, therefore, ask in Faith, nothing wavering; and an Answer of Peace is to be expected on the Account of our Saviour's Merits only. Under this Branch of Prayer we are to ask for Pardon of past Sin and Grace to enable us to walk as becomes the Gospel for the Future; we are to intreat the good Spirit of God to enable us to hate Sin as an evil Thing and a bitter, odious in its Nature, and destructive in its Consequences, and to transform us by the renewing of our Minds; we are to pray for Faith, which is the Gift of God; for a firm Belief of, and Assent to, the Gospel of Christ; we are to intreat him to introduce us into his Favour for Christ's Sake,—in a Word, we are to implore of God to keep us by his Spirit from falling, and at last to present us faultless before the Presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy. The same Things we are also to ask for others. Under this Part of Prayer are to be exercised Faith, Importu-

nity, Ardor, and Constancy; and by thus Seeking, we may expect to find.

4. *Another Branch of Prayer is Thanksgiving.* We all enjoy many and great Favours which come from God, and it is but a fit Return that we pay our grateful Acknowledgment to him therefor. This Part of Prayer supposes that our Mercies flow from the divine Benignity, and that, as he is the sole Author of them, the Praise thereof is his just Due. While, therefore, we are employed in giving Thanks to Heaven with our Lips, our Hearts should join therewith. This, indeed, is absolutely necessary in all divine Service, that the Sentiments and Exercises of the Soul agree with the Language of the Lips. Under this Part of Prayer we praise God for all the Tokens of his Favour, both with Regard to this and a better Life: for his Goodness to us in making us wiser than the Beasts of the Field, for making us capable of performing to him a reasonable Service, and for the Hopes of being made happy by him and of being employed in more exalted Services in his Temple above. We also praise him for all his providential Goodness in providing so liberally for the Support and Comfort of our outward Man, withal intreating him to continue these his Favours to us, and to give us Wisdom rightly to improve them. These are the four general Parts of Prayer to which all the Branches thereof may be reduced, and in which they may be comprised.

II. We pass to consider the second Proposition:

The Reasonableness of this Duty. The Fitness and Reasonableness of Prayer appears from the Nature of it, from the positive Institutions and Precepts of God, and from its Efficacy and apparent Tendency to promote our own Happiness. 1. First, *The Fitness and Reasonableness of Prayer appears from the Nature of the Duty.* We are surely dependent Creatures; we are obliged to some Being greater than ourselves for every Branch of our Happiness. What then more fit and reasonable than to spread our Wants before the Author of all Good, and implore a gracious Supply of them? It is certainly fit that we acknowledge the divine Benignity in all the good Things we enjoy. And how can this be done more fitly and reverently than in Prayer, wherein we professedly declare our Wants and Indigency, and ascribe all Perfection and Blessedness to God? It is plainly fit and right that we cherish a Sense of the unspeakable Distance there is between God and us, in order to our conducting ourselves with that Reverence and Awe towards the divine Being that our Relation to him and our Distance from him require. What then more fit than Prayer, wherein we survey and acknowledge the infinite Perfections of God? This tends to sink us into a becoming Sense of our Littleness and of God's Immensity; and this naturally begets within us that Dread of God's Majesty and that Fear of his Excellence which should always influence our Conduct. And as we have all more or less acted unworthy our Relation to God,

it is but just that we confess this our Folly and Unhappiness, taking all the Iniquity and Shame of it to ourselves. Not to acknowledge our Offences against God would be to add Iniquity to Sin. This would be the Way to provoke the holy one of Israel to vindicate the Honor of his broken Laws by inflicting upon us awful and deserved Ruin. Repentance towards God whom we have offended is fit and suitable in the Nature of Things; and hearty Sorrow for all our Misconduct before God is very becoming us, and fit and necessary according to the Constitution of Things, in order to our being pardoned and received into Favour with God. And therefore Confession of Sin, with corresponding Penitency, Sorrow, and Humility of Soul, is but a Part of our reasonable Service to God. Again, it is plainly fit and right that when Favours have been received, grateful Returns should be made; a Condition different from this would be unreasonable and brutish, and base Ingratitude. Our Thanksgiving, therefore, to God for his Goodness is a reasonable and fit Conduct towards the Author of all our Mercies; for verily, it is a good Thing to give Thanks; and it is a very pleasant part of divine Worship to every grateful Soul, to sing the Praises of the Most High, and talk of all his wondrous Works. Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty! O Lord, how manifold are thy Works! Abundantly merciful is God, and kind even to the Evil and Unthankful; his Goodness is over all his Works; praise him, therefore, all ye

People, and let all the Nations of the Earth praise him. But

2. Secondly, *The Fitness and Reasonableness of Prayer appears from the divine Command.* "Behold, I have commanded you," or, "Thus saith the Lord," is of more Authority than all the human Reasons in the World; for God has an absolute Right to command us, and we are indispensably bound to obey him; and therefore, although we should be unable to see the full Reasonableness and Fitness of any of the divine Precepts, yet, if we are certain the Command is from God, we must regard it; because we know that there is a Reason for it in the divine Mind: being certain that infinite Wisdom and Goodness cannot act unwisely or unkindly. The Commands of God are to be therefore esteemed, as they indeed are, holy, just, and good, and intirely right concerning all Things. But you are not to imagine — notwithstanding what I have now said — that the Reason and Nature of the divine Precepts are so far remote from our Capacity as not to be in a good Measure understood by us. I have endeavored to show the Reasonableness of Prayer under the former Particular, from the Nature of it, without having Recourse to the divine Command concerning it. What I have now said of God's absolute Sovereignty over us was to convince you of the Fitness of our obeying all his Precepts when once known to be from him, although we should not be intirely and fully acquainted with the Reason of them and their Tendency to promote

God's Honor and our Happiness, viewed in their own Nature. So a dutiful Child obeys his Father's Commands although he does not always see the Wisdom of them. However, the Commands of God are most, if not all of them, level to our Capacities, so far that if we study them as we ought we shall find they naturally tend to advance the Glory of God and the Good of Man; and therefore we see the indispensable Necessity of keeping them. But we now observe that Prayer is a commanded Duty, and therefore fit and reasonable. That Prayer is a commanded Duty is evident from Scripture in many Places. "Pray without ceasing," says the Apostle (1 Thess. v. 17); and again, Timothy says: "I will therefore that Men pray everywhere" (1 Tim. ii. 8). To refuse to comply with this Duty is to omit a plain Injunction of God and to rob him of his just Dues; it is to refuse to have God to reign over us; it is renouncing our Relation to him as our Lord and Redeemer, and exposing ourselves to the executive Displeasure of that God who will be honored by all his Children, and who will show his awful Displeasure against such as call not upon his Name. Again,

3. Thirdly, *The Reasonableness and Fitness of Prayer appears from its Efficacy to promote our best Interests.*

We have already considered Prayer as reasonable in its own Nature, and also as positively enjoined by God, from whence it appears that it tends to promote our Felicity: for if it is reasonable in itself and also commanded by God, it is evidently our

Duty, with which our Happiness is inseparably connected; for we serve a Being who has made our Duty and Happiness the same; so that to talk of Happiness out of the Way of Duty is preposterous, or of Duty which does not lead to Happiness: so it is plain that Prayer tends to advance our Felicity. By this we are naturally led to the Fountain of all Good, and made to look to him as the only Happiness of Mankind. By this we seek — and as it were bespeak — the Friendship of that Being who is able to do abundantly for us "above all that we ask or think." It appears from holy Writ that this Duty tends greatly to promote our Peace and Comfort. "Call upon me in the Day of Trouble," says God, and "I will deliver thee" (Ps. l. 15). And when the Apostle, in our Text, had urged the Philippians in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, to let their Requests be made known unto God, he adds, in the next Verse: "And the Peace of God, which passeth all Understanding, shall keep your Hearts and Minds through Christ Jesus."

A firm Persuasion of God's Readiness to supply our Wants and pity our Distresses is a Ground of great Peace and Serenity to all who thus believingly spread their Case before him. When we are thus enabled to pray and submit our Cause to God, we do with great Satisfaction rest and depend on his Goodness for a gracious Answer.

It is doubtless a very great Comfort to all pious Persons that in all Cases of Difficulty and Distress

they may apply themselves to a gracious and prayer-hearing God, and commit their Souls into his Hands. It is plain Prayer is an happy Privilege as well as Duty, by the many successful Petitions we have recorded for our Encouragement in Scripture. How often do we find there Judgments turned away and Blessings obtained by fervent Prayer! How often was Moses called to stand between a provoked God and a rebellious People, and by Prayer to turn away the fierce Anger of Heaven from them! How graciously was God pleased to turn from the Fierceness of his Anger towards the Ninevites, and save that mighty City upon the Fasting and Praying of the Inhabitants thereof, although he had before declared, by his Prophet, that Nineveh within forty Days should be ruined. And our Saviour, in one of his Parables, very strikingly represents the Efficacy of Prayer. It is in the Parable of the unjust Judge and the Widow, who obtained her Request of him by Importunity and Fervency, although he is represented as not fearing God (see 18th of Luke). By such Examples and Representations of the Efficacy of Prayer we should be encouraged to pray always and not faint. Let this scriptural Light suffice to show the Reasonableness and Wisdom of Prayer to God; and if we were to view Prayer in itself as an excellent, divine, pleasurable Duty, and as implying our Devotion to God, we should find it of an happy moral Tendency.

III. [Under the third general Proposition] *we consider the Fitness and Necessity of being constant*

and particular in Prayer. "In every Thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God." We have shown Prayer in general to be wise and fit from the Nature of the Duty, from the positive Injunction of God, and from its Tendency to promote our own Felicity. Now, as the general Reasons for Praying at all are always the same, it is fit and necessary that we be constant in this Duty. There is the same Reason for serving God to-day that made it fit we should serve him yesterday; so that, if we would be accepted in Prayer, we must make it the daily Business of our Lives.

We are commanded also to be particular in Prayers, and to make *all* our Requests known unto God, and to pour out our whole Soul before him. This tends to beget within us a Temper of Mind suited to the various Parts of Prayer. If we are particular in surveying all our Faults and in enumerating all our Iniquities before God, it will tend to promote great Humility and true Repentance for so numerous and so vile Miscarriages as we shall see ourselves to have been guilty of. If we are particular in petitioning for all the Mercies we stand in Need of, it will tend to show us how greatly we need the divine Favour, and how much we are indebted to God for our daily Mercies; and by dwelling on the various Instances of his Goodness in our Thanksgiving, we naturally cherish a grateful Disposition of Soul and a Sense of the divine Goodness which we so richly share in.

Without Constancy in Prayer we should be exposed to a Forgetfulness of God, and be apt to lose that constant Sense of him, as knowing our Thoughts and all our Actions, which should always influence our whole Conduct. And by losing this Sense of the Deity we soon begin to live as without God in the World; and this is a very unhappy State. After we once forget God by omitting plain Duty towards him, we presently become daring enough to violate his Laws. For if we can receive his Favours without Gratitude, and omit our daily Duty to him and our just Acknowledgment of his Goodness, we easily learn to trample upon his Authority and despise his Laws. One Sin is not alone, commonly; and when we have learned to omit Duty and cast aside the Fear of God, there is a Door open to all Manner of Sin and Mischief. Now, a constant Sense of the all-seeing Eye of God, and of our Accountableness to him for all our Conduct, is an happy Preservative against these Evils; and therefore constant Communion with God by Prayer is very wise and fit, and not to be omitted but with great Danger and Hazard.

Think of this, ye that forget God by prayerless Lives!

AFTERNOON SERMON.

HAVING spoken of Prayer in general and briefly shown its Nature and Design, with its Fitness and Reasonableness, and offered some Considerations for being constant and particular in this Duty, I now pass to say a Word of some of the several Kinds of Prayer as they are distinguished by different Names, with Regard to the Time and Place and Circumstances in which it is performed; and first of publick Prayer, which falls under the fourth general Head.

IV. *Publick Prayer and Supplication.* Our blessed Lord has graciously introduced the Advantages of Society to Religion; for as secret Worship has several peculiar Advantages in it, so has social. Now, it is plain that among other Parts of social Worship Prayer is one; and that by Scripture, under the former Dispensation, it was Part of the Priest's Office to attend upon the daily Sacrifices, and there, in Behalf of the People, to present their Prayers and Supplications to God. And it is observable that while the Priest was burning Incense within the Temple, the whole of the People stood without,

praying; and no Doubt, says one (Doddridge), it was a Part of the Priest's Duty to concur in the Devotions which in their Name he presented before God (Luke i. 9–13). And it is said of that great Multitude which was converted by the Preaching of the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost that they continued stedfastly in the Apostolick Doctrine and Fellowship, and in Breaking of Bread, and in *Prayer* (Acts ii. 42). It appears to have been the Practice of the Apostles and their Disciples frequently to meet together for social and publick Prayer. And when Peter was freed from his Chains and led out of Prison by an Angel, the first Thing he did was to resort to such a social Meeting for religious Worship, viz., to the House of Mary the Mother of John, whose Sirname was Mark, where many were gathered together, *praying* (Acts xii. 12). And when Paul and Silas were at Philippi on the Sabbath Day, they "went out of the City by a Riverside, where Prayer was wont to be made" (Acts xvi. 13). And the Psalmist is often speaking of praising God in publick and in the Assembly of his Saints, etc., which was his great Joy and Delight. "I will give thee Thanks in the great Congregation: I will praise thee among much People" (Ps. xxxv. 18); and again, in the 122. Psalm: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord. Our Feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem. Whither the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of Israel, to give Thanks unto the Name of the Lord."

From the Whole it appears abundantly evident that publick Prayer is scriptural, being proved by Precept and Example.

Having thus shown publick Prayer to be a Duty, I shall conclude what I have to say under this general Head by briefly showing some of the Advantages thereof.

First, *Publick Prayer may be supposed to be very useful for the Instruction of many who join therein.* In all publick Assemblies for divine Worship the whole Congregation should join with him who leads therein; and while one is the Mouth of the Rest they should join in Spirit and Heart with him and intreat God graciously to accept of his Prayer in their Behalf. Now, in many of our Assemblies it is to be supposed there are some who have had but little Opportunity for religious Improvement and few Advantages to gain Wisdom and Instruction. It is then manifestly advantageous to such to be assisted in making suitable Petitions to God, and in addressing him in Language which becomes the Relation we stand in to him. By this they are assisted in forming their Conceptions of the Deity. Hence they learn with what Reverence and Veneration of Soul it becomes them to address the infinite Majesty of Heaven; hence they are informed with what Prostration and Abasement of Spirit they should enter the divine Presence; hence they learn their Unhappiness without the Favour of God, and the Wisdom and Suitableness of Seeking him as their God and Portion, — in a Word, by this they

are assisted to form just Conceptions of the Nature, Design, and Importance of Prayer and religious Worship.

Secondly, *Publick Prayer tends to excite the Devotion of all concerned therein and whose Business it is to join in the Worship.* In whatsoever Employment Numbers are engaged, they assist and animate one another. So it is in religious Exercises; and as Prayer is one of the most devotional Parts of religious Worship, Numbers joined therein greatly animate and assist one another's Devotions and pious Affections. To see and be engaged among a large Assembly of reasonable and immortal Creatures all devoutly fixed in making their solemn Addresses to the one eternal Jehovah, all imploring by one Mouth and with one Heart the same Favours and deprecating the same Misery and Wrath, is one of the most agreeable Sights under Heaven, and greatly encouraging and animating to all true Christians; to all who have the Happiness of joining therein. And when at such Times we consider ourselves as seeking Favours of the most exalted Kind and which are to last forever, and that we are worshiping that Being who is ready to bestow these immortal Favours upon all who seek them in a right Manner, and also that we have Reason to think that we are serving him in an acceptable Sort, one would think it would raise Devotion in the coldest Heart and blow every Spark of divine Love into a Flame. To join in the Services and Praises of the King of Heaven in his Temple here below with

devoutly pious Hearts seems an Emblem of those Joys and Services which will be the Delight and Happiness of the Saints and Angels when the Assembly shall be compleat in the World above. And when Numbers are thus piously engaged in praying to and praising God, the Fixedness and Devotion which is observable in the Faces of all around as it were catches from one to another till the Flame of Devotion and Zeal becomes general.

But it is time that I pass to our fifth general Head, and say Something of Family Prayer.

V. *Family Prayer is another Kind into which Prayer in general is divided.* Family Prayer, in so many Words, is not, as I remember, expressly commanded in Scripture; but then it may be very justly inferred from many Passages thereof that it is a Duty and well-pleasing in the Sight of God. We are frequently injoined in Scripture a constant Care to bring up our Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, to train them up in the Way they should walk, etc.; and as Parents are doubtless to instruct their Children by Example as well as Precept, they are bound to pray with and for them; for Prayer being an indispensable Duty, they are bound to teach their Children the Nature and Importance of it; which cannot be done any Way so effectually as being constant in the Duty themselves, for the Example of a Parent has a most powerful Influence with Children: and although Parents should now and then tell their Children that Prayer to God is an indispensable Duty, and

that they can never expect his Blessing without humbly and fervently seeking it, yet if they neglect the Duty themselves and practically disbelieve the Necessity and Importance of it, they have little or no Reason to expect their Children should act otherwise: and therefore it is evidently hazardous to neglect this Family Worship, for it is plainly acting unreasonably, and omitting that Duty which evidently tends to their and their Children's best Happiness.

But there are other Texts of Scripture which more immediately recommend Family Religion, of which Prayer is a great Part. It is recorded in Praise of the pious Joshua that he resolved that he with his House would serve the Lord (Joshua xxiv. 15); and of Cornelius that he was a devout Man, and one that feared God with all his House and gave much Alms to the People and prayed to God alway (Acts x. 2); and of the pious Psalmist, that he would walk in his House with a perfect Heart (Ps. ci. 2). From these and such like Texts it appears that Family Religion and Prayer is very scriptural; it is certainly of very happy Tendency. Family Prayer has a natural Influence in solemnizing the Minds of Children and Servants, and such others as join therein.

Youth is the moulding and turning Age, and therefore it is of vast Importance that Children be set out in the Paths of Virtue before they become habituated to vicious Practices. And Family Prayer, joined with other and godly Instruction,

has a very strong Tendency to recommend Virtue and make Sin appear dangerous and vile to Youth; for when Children are thus daily taught that God is their Preserver and Redeemer, and that he has an absolute and sovereign Right to their Services and Praises, and that it is vile and abominable to refrain Prayer and grateful Acknowledgment before their only Saviour, and that God never can delight in such Ingratitude and Disobedience, but that on the other Hand he will be graciously found of such as love and serve him, they will presently see the Beauty and Excellence of Religion and the Baseness and Danger of Sin and Folly.

But I hasten to say, under the sixth and last general Head, a Word of secret Prayer.

VI. *Secret Prayer is another Kind or Division of Prayer.* "And when thou prayest thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the Corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men. Verily I say unto you, they have their Reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy Closet; and when thou hast shut thy Door, pray to thy Father which is in Secret; and thy Father, which seeth in Secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matt. vi. 5, 6).

The Pharisees, who were very Hypocrites, made Pretences to uncommon Piety and Religion; and by the Parade and Show which they made about Religion they doubtless deceived many who took them to be remarkable Saints and Men of singular Piety

and Devotion; but God, who seeth not as Man seeth, discovered their vile Hypocrisy, though veiled from the Eyes of Men by the Appearance of extraordinary Piety, and he abhorred their awful Mockery of him. And our blessed Saviour, as though he would guard his Disciples against Hypocrisy and a Desire of human Applause in their Devotions, directs them to pray to God in such Circumstances as were free from Temptation to such dreadful Mockery.

By this Precept and the Example of our Saviour and of Daniel and others, it appears that secret Prayer is acceptable and well-pleasing in the Sight of God. And it is evidently a great Privilege, which has several Advantages peculiar to itself, as, First, *In secret Prayer we may be particular in confessing and bewailing before God such Faults as would be unfitly done in private* [family?] *or publick Prayer.* Many Faults and Failings we shall find ourselves guilty of, if we make diligent Search after them, which we should be greatly ashamed to have known to the World. Now, in secret Prayer we may and ought to lament greatly these Things before God which are so vile as to make us blush to have the worst of Men privy to them. God knows all these Parts of our unworthy Conduct, and it is intirely fit that we spread them before him in the Abasement of our Souls, intreating him to blot them out and remember them not against us.

Again, *In secret Prayer we may be more particular and explicit in our Pleading with God for Pardon*

of these Sins, and for Support against Temptation of them and of the Sins which most easily beset us, than would be fit in social Prayer. In this secret Communion between God and our own Souls we may plead with him the Weakness of our Nature and the Goodness of his, and his Grace through the Redeemer to pardon our Unworthiness and strengthen us against Temptation, with that particular Freedom and Fervency that might be unfit at other Times and [under other] Circumstances. Here we may reveal our whole Souls to a kind and gracious God, and lay before him all our particular Wants and Desires, and plead before him [for] those Aids and Assistances which we find ourselves most in Want of. And, for our Encouragement in this Duty, we have the Promise of him who seeth in Secret that he will reward us openly.

Under this Head of secret Prayer we may mention ejaculatory Prayer, which is a Kind of sudden Petition to God offered up upon any Emergency or Difficulty that may happen to us at any Time of Life. But this I only mention. It is, however, doubtless our Duty on such Occasions, as in all our Concerns, to let our Requests be known to God; for we are commanded to pray always and to watch unto Prayer, — that is, to cherish a prayerful Temper and Disposition.

Having thus briefly and imperfectly spoken to the general Heads of our Subject, we pass to some Improvement of the Whole.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. Is Prayer but our reasonable Service, and is it in very Deed fit that in all Things by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, to let our Requests be made known unto God, then we learn that they who cast off Fear and restrain Prayer before God act a very unreasonable Part. This it is very plain they do, for they rob God of his just Due from them; and besides, they do, by such a Conduct, forsake their own Mercies. By this they forsake the true Fountain, and therefore they cannot reasonably expect that the Lord that made them will have any Mercy upon them; for God has expressly declared that he will be sought to for his Mercy. And how can such Persons in the Nature of Things ever flatter themselves that that God whom they practically despise, whose Laws they daily violate, and whose Precepts they refuse to obey, will choose them for his Favourites and make them the Subjects of everlasting Favour? Surely such Persons run the most awful Hazard of being everlastingly banished from the Presence of that God who will erelong vindicate the Honor of his Government in the amazing Ruin of all who are finally impenitent and disobedient. A God of Justice will not always let the Wicked go free, nor suffer his Goodness to be always trampled upon; and they who now refuse to regard either Invitations or Threatenings, either Mercies or Judgment, have Nothing to expect but

that God will suffer them to perish in their Sins, and pronounce that dreadful Sentence against them which is in Proverbs i. 24–29: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof: I also will laugh at your Calamity; I will mock when your Fear cometh; when your Fear cometh as Desolation and your Destruction cometh as a Whirlwind; when Distress and Anguish cometh upon you. Then they shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated Knowledge and did not choose the Fear of the Lord."

2. Hence we learn the Wisdom and Safety of such as now seek God while he may be found. As those who do not seek God act a very unreasonable and foolish Part, so those who do, act wisely and safely. They who make it their daily Business to seek the Favour of God by Prayer as well as by other Means are now steadily pursuing their best Interests; for the Favour of God is Life. They are now seeking Reconciliation with him who is infinitely able to make them happy in Spite of whatever may lay in the Way thereto. The Prize which they seek is infinitely worthy in itself, and it will last forever; and they are seeking this Prize in the only Way in which it may reasonably be expected. And this Exercise of Prayer has a natural Tendency, as before observed, to beget within us those Qualifications and those Tempers which fit

us for the Enjoyment of God. It has a natural Tendency to make us humble and penitent before God, and to beget within us a Care to walk circumspectly and cautiously at all Times; for Prayer will make us leave Sinning, or Sinning will make us leave Prayer. That is, the different Acts have a Tendency to destroy each other, for being diametrically opposite they cannot subsist together, which is a most unnatural and awful Hypothesis. For if a Man sin allowedly, it is the most preposterous and presumptuous Thing in the World for him to go to God by Prayer for Pardon and for Assistance in that pious Course which he has not [begun], nor designed to begin. On the Reverse, a Man who sincerely and fervently begs Forgiveness of God for past Sins, and his Assistance and Direction to act wisely and faithfully for the Future, will find this has a strong Tendency to make him shun every impious Act, because he sees it is abominable and dreadful Impiety to run freely into that Sin which he has implored God's Help to enable him to shun. Thus solemn Prayer to God against Sin lays us under very sensible Obligations to labor against it. And therefore Prayer has a natural, essential, and gracious Tendency to make us wiser and better, or, in other Words, to promote our best Interests. And this shows the Wisdom and Safety of such as make Conscience of being punctual and steady in this Duty.

3. Again, Is publick Prayer scriptural, does it promote the Instruction and Devotion of such as join

therein, then learn the Duty of being fixed and attentive therein. Your Instructions and Devotions will not be increased in publick Prayer unless you attend thereto and join fixedly therein; for how can you be instructed by Anything which you do not attend to or think upon? How can your Devotions be animated by that of others or by the Nature of the Prayer if you attend to neither of them, but let your Thoughts run to and fro to the Ends of the Earth? Be persuaded, therefore, to be attentive in all Parts of publick Worship. And remember that not only he that is your Mouth or that leads in Prayer is obliged to be fixed and engaged, but that you must join with him if you would profit by it; for it is Mockery to wait on God with your Body while your Heart is far from him.

4. Is Family Prayer practical, does it tend to keep a solemn and reverent Sense of God upon your own Minds, — I speak to Parents, — and does it greatly tend to promote Seriousness and Piety in Youth, then let all Parents remember that they neglect this Duty at their dreadful Peril. You who omit this Duty neglect that which tends greatly to the Peace of your own Conscience and the Religion and Happiness of your Children and other Domesticks. Parents or Heads of Families are wont to make Excuses for their Omission of this Duty which are by no Means sufficient justly to excuse them. To say they have some in the Family who will not submit to this Duty is no just Reason

for the Omission of it; for they are Masters and Heads of the Family, and they must govern it both in Spirituals and Temporals in such a Manner as appears most scriptural and acceptable to God. To say they are unlearned and incapable of putting up their Petitions in a fit Manner cannot be supposed a sufficient Excuse for such as live in a Christian Land and who have their Bibles in their Hands. Besides, you must remember that Sincerity is what God looks at, and an unlearned Man may be as sincere as any. But if indeed you are greatly ignorant both as to the Matter and Manner of Prayer, you have more abundant Reason to pray to God to enlighten you and assist you in becoming acquainted with your own Wants; and this by assisting your Studies of the Scriptures and of your own Hearts. You must remember that it is a good Prayer to desire of God that you may be enabled to pray. I think I have heard of a Minister who visited one of his Hearers who did not perform Family Worship and Prayer, with a full Purpose to make him pray before he left the House. The Man was surprized at his Minister's Resolution, but seeing he would take no Denial he lifted up his Eyes to Heaven with these or like Words: "Lord, *teach* me to pray, for I cannot pray of myself." The Minister was well satisfied with the Success of his Visit, and I think that the Man became serious and devout from that Day. Let this excite others to go to God and do likewise. Christian Regularity in a Family is a most pleasing Sight. How pleasant it is to see Brethren and

Parents and Families dwell in Christian Union! And when can we expect a general Reformation unless it is begun in Families; unless Children are trained up in the Ways of Piety?

I might observe that as secret Prayer is a Duty and Privilege, we should be much in communing with God in Prayer and our own Hearts by Meditation. As you love your own Souls, regard the Honor of God and the Happiness of the rising Generation, I would exhort you who are Parents to think of these Things; and may all learn the Importance of Prayer.

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee Understanding in all Things."

Paul Coffin

NOTE.

On the following leaf is a fac-simile of the last page of the sermon, in the handwriting of Dr. Coffin.

The note at the bottom of it is as follows: —

Narrag: Nº 1. Sept: 6. 1761. A. et P. M.
Ibid, Aug: 15. 1762. The first Serm: yt were deliver'd in | [the] Meeting-House.
Ibid, March 2. 1766. Buxton'—4 [1804].

32 But if indeed you are greatly ignor-
-both as to Matt: & Manr: of Pray, you
have more a blind Reas: - pray - y - enligh-
-ten you & assist you in becoming acq-
-uainted with y^r own Wants; & this by
a prizing y^r Studies & Ser^s, & of y^r own
Hearts. You must remem: y^t 'tis a good
Pray: - desire of G y^t you may be enabled
pray. I think I have heard of a Minister, who
visited one of his Hearers who did not perform
Fam: Worship & Pray:, with a full Purpose
- make him pray before he left the House.
The Man was surprized at his Ministers Resol:
but seeing he would take no Denial he
left up his Eyes & Hands, with these words "Lord
teach Me to pray, for I cannot pray & my
the Minist: was well satisfied with the Success
of his Visit. And I think, the Man became fer: &
devout for y^t Day. Let this excite others to
go - G, & do likewise. Oh! what Regularity in
a Fam: is a most pleas: Sight. how pleas:
'tis to see Brethren & Sis: & Fam: dwell in
Oh! Union! And we can We expect a gen:
Reformat: unless 'tis begun in Fam:, unless
Child: are trained up in the Way & Duty ——?
I might observe, y^t as Secret Pray: is a Duty
& Priviledge, We should be much in Communing
by meditat: in Pray: with G & our own Hearts as you love
y^r own Souls, regard the Honor of G, & the Happi-
-ness of rising Gener:, I would exhort you, as are
parents, - think of these Things. & may all
Ages & Inspirat: of Pray: Confid: wt Pray: ——!

Marriag: on 4 Sept: 1761. Aet: 23 M.
Son Aug: 18: 1762. the first delivered in the Meetinghouse
died March 21 1766. Buxton 4.

ADDRESS

BY CYRUS WOODMAN.

ON Sunday morning, the 15th of August, 1762, one hundred and twenty-four years ago this day, the early settlers of Buxton, then called Narraganset No. 1, with their wives, their children, and their minister, assembled here to dedicate to Almighty God the new meeting-house which their hands had builded. Then, in that "tabernacle of the congregation," came the people together before the Lord, to listen to the first prayer that was offered, to the first hymn that was sung, and to the first sermon that was preached, on this now consecrated spot.

If we would fully realize the significance and influence of this event, its relation to the people then and now, and especially to this church and congregation from that day to this, we must go back to the first settlement of the town, and endeavour, by such light as we may get from history and tradition, to learn something concerning the first settlers, their condition and circumstances, their religious privileges and their minister. This is my theme to-day.

The first settlement of this town probably began in 1739; but in 1744 — France having declared war against England — the few settlers then here left their homes for fear of being attacked by the French and Indians. Some of them came back in 1750 to reoccupy their abandoned homes. Others came with them; and the permanent settlement of the town then began, though not without some dread still of the war-whoop and the scalping-knife. They came, the men and the women, with little else than stout hands and brave hearts, to encounter the toils and endure the privations of the wilderness.

For the first year or two they must have depended much upon Saco for their provisions, which came up the river by boat to Union Falls, or were brought on foot or on horseback, by cart or by sled, over roughest roads.

When the meeting-house was erected, the earliest settlers (1750) had been here twelve years. During that time the inhabitants had built saw-mills and a grist-mill, had improved the roads, and in various ways were in a better condition than at first. The most of them, even then, must have been living in log houses or in rough framed ones that were little, if any, better; and it is safe to say that at that date not a house in town had been painted inside or out, and that no room had been plastered. It is probable that but few houses had more than a dozen panes of glass, and that some of them had none, but obtained the light of day through the doorway and through an aperture in

the wall which was closed at night. The rude houses did not lack ventilation. In winter weather the outer air, entering through a thousand cracks and crannies, was drawn with speed to the vast open fireplace, whence it ascended in flame and smoke through the capacious chimney, and departed with a loud but pleasing roar to cool itself in the heavens above. Against this rush of cold air, the old-fashioned settle, with its back rising above the head of the sitter, afforded a grateful and needed protection.

The furniture consisted almost solely of articles of prime necessity. Chairs were few; benches and logs of wood cut to a proper height for seats were common. Pewter dishes were common for those who could afford them, and wooden trenchers for those who could not. Knives and forks were in scant supply, and spoons were of iron and of pewter instead of silver. Crockery then came from England, was dear, and being easily broken was too costly for general use; but articles of common earthenware made by the potter in some neighbouring town, we may presume, were obtainable and within the means of the settler. In a word, the poorest house in town to-day is probably better furnished than the best one was then.

The farming utensils, so far as they were made of wood, were manufactured by the settler himself or by some neighbour who had special skill in that direction. The axe, the hoe, the coulter and ploughshare, the ox-chain, the drawing-knife, and

most other implements of iron or steel were specially ordered from the blacksmith. The cooking utensils consisted only of those things which were of use in the oven or by an open fire. The bread was baked in an oven or on a board before the fire, or in that very convenient article for various uses called in my boyhood the Dutch oven. It is a flat-bottomed iron kettle sitting upon legs, and having a heavy, slightly convex iron cover with a handle in the centre, and a rim. This was set on the hearth, with coals and ashes above and below. Sometimes, too, as I myself have seen it, the dough was protected by cabbage-leaves and put upon the hot hearth in a place scraped out for the purpose, and then covered with ashes.

The turkey, the sirloin, and the spareribb were cooked to perfection by attaching them to a string suspended before the fire and keeping them revolving by the twisting and untwisting of the string. Much of the food was cooked by boiling in an iron pot, which hung over the fire and was suspended by pot-hooks from an iron crane or, in lack of a crane, from a pole which ran across the chimney.

In the earliest years of the settlement corn and wheat were sometimes scarce, and the settlers "were forced to cut their bread very thin;" but at the time of which I am speaking those who came first had cattle and swine, and were doubtless raising good crops from the virgin soil and getting bread and meat enough to last them through the year

and to enable them to spare something for the newcomers. At certain seasons of the year salmon abounded; for then no obstructions impeded their passage from the mouth of the river to its sources. This fine fish, whether fresh, pickled, or smoked, was a welcome addition to the diet of the inhabitants.[1]

They were also, doubtless, beginning to raise some wool and flax, which were spun and woven into cloth by the women; whose instruments of music were not then the piano, the harp, and the organ, but the big wheel for the wool, and the little wheel for the flax, and the noisy looms which

"Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the song of the maidens."

And here I hope you will pardon me for going a little out of my way to say — what I am proud to say — that my blessed mother could card, spin, and weave, and that I have myself, in this house, worn the cloth which she had spun and woven.

None of the first settlers had enjoyed any educational advantages beyond those furnished by the common school; and many of them, probably, had had little even of that. Their children, too, in those early days of toil and privation had little opportunity for schooling. In the first ten years there was no school; for we are told, on good authority,

[1] In the summer of 1886 salmon made their appearance in Buxton after an absence of about seventy years. The water in the river was then so low that they could not pass the dam at Bar Mills; and for this reason, probably, none appeared in 1887.

that the first one was opened in 1761, and was taught by Silas Moody, who was afterwards for many years the first settled minister at Arundel, now Kennebunkport.

The spiritual welfare of the settlers was not neglected. It was a subject of thought and action from the very beginning of the settlement. In 1739, when there were very few, if any, settlers here, but when an earnest attempt at settlement was about to be made, a committee was appointed to select a site for a meeting-house, and, in the language of the vote, "to agree with some person or persons to Clere Som Land on the westerly end of the first or Second Lots Known by the Letter D. in the first Devision in Said Township to build a meeting House on, for the Publick worship of God of the Contents of thirty feet long & Twenty five feet wide & nine feet Stud of hune timber & the Roof to be borded & Short Shingled & the said Committee are to have said House well finished fit to preach in by the Last Day of September which will be in the year 1740." There was delay in carrying this vote into effect; but the meeting-house was erected late in 1742, or early in 1743.

It stood on the hill at Salmon Falls, near where the house of Mr. Ansel Merrill now stands. In that meeting-house, after 1750, Timothy White[1] preached six months or more, Josua Tufts[2] two years, and Paul Coffin about eighteen months. A Mr. Thomp-

[1] Minister at Nantucket; died 1763; graduated at Harvard, 1720.

[2] A graduate of Harvard, 1736.

son[1] is said also to have preached in town about this time; and some others, whose names are not recorded, probably preached one or more Sabbaths in the log meeting-house. If it were out of repair, or the weather cold, meetings were held in the house of Lieutenant Samuel Merrill, which was close by; and in consideration of his allowing his house so to be used, the Proprietors gave him this old log meeting-house when, by the building of a new one, it was no longer needed. It had then stood about nineteen years.

On the 22d of July, 1760, the Proprietors voted to build a new meeting-house forty-five feet long by thirty-five feet wide, and of a proper stud; and Joseph Woodman, Joseph Leavitt, and Jeremiah Hill were chosen as a committee to carry the vote into effect. A lot on which to build it had been procured, and on the 8th of April, 1761, was conveyed by Isaac Hancock to a committee of the Proprietors of the town. It covers not only the site of the meeting-house, but also a small part of the graveyard and the greater part of the common.

The site is a pleasant one. I never fully realized how pleasant it is until, after an absence of many years, I came here with your then pastor, the Rev. Joseph Bartlett. We walked together from his home, entered this house, and ascended to the bel-

[1] I spell this name as I find it in the Memoir of Dr. Coffin by his son Charles; but the person was probably the Rev. William Tompson, who in 1728 was ordained and settled in Scarborough, where he died in 1759.

fry. There, pointing out the wide and varied scene from the low head of Agamenticus to the lofty summit of Mount Washington, and the charming combination of hill and dale, of field and woodland, he spoke with enthusiasm of the view and of the unfailing satisfaction which it afforded him; and when, looking down upon God's acre at our feet, he called it a pleasant spot, and said that he should be pleased there himself to rest when his earthly labours should be finished, it was evident that the home of his heart was with his parishioners here.

His words impressed me. They invest the landscape with an added charm, and this quiet place of the dead, where he now rests, with a more tender interest.

Under the above-mentioned vote the building of the meeting-house was begun; but fourteen months afterwards it was still unfinished, for on the 12–16th of November, 1761, it was voted that "there be raised 200£ lawful money to Defrey the Charges that have arisen & not yet Paid towards building the meeting-house & what shall remain to be Laid out in Glazing the meetinghouse;" and Captain Jeremiah Hill, of Biddeford, and Captain Joseph Woodman and Lieutenant Joshua Woodman, of this place, were chosen as a committee to lay out the £200, and, in the language of the vote, "also to Groundpin said meetinghouse." Under this vote the meeting-house was so far completed as to be opened for public worship on the 15th of August, 1762; but when the

first sermon was preached in it, it had neither pulpit nor pews, but benches only.

Having brought to mind the general condition of the settlers and of the circumstances by which they were surrounded, and knowing the fact that under the vote which I have just read a meeting-house was here erected by them in 1762, it will be gratifying to call them, or most of them, by name. This, fortunately, we are able to do. The names of most of them were appended to the call which was given to Mr. Coffin to settle with them "in the work of the ministry."

The signers to the call were Humphrey Atkinson, John Boynton, John Brooks, Jonathan Clay, Richard Clay, Richard Clay, Jr., John Cole, John Dunnell, Benjamin Dunnell, John Elden, James Emery, William Hancock, Timothy Hasaltine, Eleazer Kimball, John Lane, Daniel Leavitt, Joseph Leavitt, Samuel Leavitt, David Martin, Samuel Merrill, John Nason, Ebenezer Redlon, Jacob Redlon, Job Roberts, Samuel Rolfe, Thomas Sands, Stephen Safford, Joseph Woodman, Nathan Woodman. Add to these the names of Isaac Hancock, Ephraim Sands, Joshua Woodman, and Michael Woodsum, who were then living here, but from absence or some other cause did not sign the call, and we have a nearly, and perhaps a quite, perfect list of all heads of families who were then settlers in this town. One or more of those who signed were perhaps not then heads of families. I have read thirty-three names in all. In

addition to these there may have been, and probably were, a few who being unmarried and not landholders did not sign the call.

Nearly all of those whose names I have read settled in this part of the town because it was the nearest part to Saco, was the part first surveyed into lots, and because they were, to some extent, protected by the soldiers who were stationed at the Truck House, which was situated on the bank of Saco River a little below Union Falls, in what is now Dayton. If you start from the spot where John Lane's house probably stood in 1762, and on the site of which Mr. Nathan Woodman now lives, and go thence by the old but now disused road to Salmon Falls, and then by the way of Pleasant Point to Union Falls, and then northeasterly to the Beech Plain Road and by that road to this place, you will have made a circuit which either includes or passes near to the homes of most of the settlers of that day.

They were generally husbandmen; but John Boynton was a blacksmith, Ephraim Sands a carpenter, and Stephen Safford a tailor.

It is said on good authority that there were then less than thirty families in town. Reckoning six to a family, which is probably not too large for those prolific days, and for thirty families we have one hundred and eighty individuals; or if we reckon that each of the thirty-three persons whose names I have read had a family, then we have a population of one hundred and ninety-eight. It cannot be far

out of the way to call the population two hundred at the time of which I am speaking. Most of those who were old enough would be interested to attend the first meeting in the new meeting-house; and we may estimate that from one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty persons were present on that occasion. Most of them, doubtless, came on foot; some on horseback, the wife sitting on a pillion behind the husband; and some came, not improbably, on carts drawn by oxen. There were no pleasure carriages here then. The roads were too rough for them, and the settlers too poor to buy them even if they could have been used.

No church bell called them together; clocks and watches in the new settlement did not tell them of the hour; but they well knew how to get to the meeting-house in due season.

On the morning of what we may call the dedication the men, the women, and the older children came up hither clad in plain garments, which, though homespun, were, we trust, neat and clean.

As they came here on that Sabbath morning, which we may hope was cool and calm and bright, they must have gazed with pardonable pride and reverent gladness upon the new house which they were about to consecrate, with thanksgiving, to the Lord. Rude as it was, it was yet lofty, lightsome, and capacious, in comparison with the old one of logs, which was falling to decay on the hill at Salmon Falls.

It was customary in those days for the people to gather about the doors on pleasant Sabbath morn-

ings before service began, there to greet each other, make friendly inquiries, learn the news, and talk of the crops and whatever concerned the common interest. On this morning the new meeting-house was doubtless curiously and carefully examined, affording an ample subject for discussion and criticism as well as for congratulation.

As the minister entered, the benches were occupied and decorum prevailed. There was no special dedicatory service, yet we doubt not that the house was offered to God in prayer and dedicated to His worship. The Scriptures were read, a hymn was sung, and then the preacher delivered the sermon which I have read in your presence to-day. Let us hope that they who heard it then and we who have heard it now are better for its teachings and for the earnest, prayerful spirit which pervades it.

What though no priest in gorgeous vestments led the service, no procession moved with banner and crucifix, no acolyte swung the censer to perfume the air with incense, and no pealing anthem echoed "through long-drawn aisle and fretted vault," yet was the house so dedicated in simple form to God no less His temple, and the worship no less acceptable in His sight.

Leaving the house of God with reverent feet, let us turn again to those first settlers of whom we have already spoken. They were our ancestors, and it becomes us to pay to them that respect which is their due.

Of all those who were here when the meeting-house of 1762 was erected, no portrait, I think, exists except that of the minister; and their graves, with very few exceptions, are unmarked and unknown. We know little of their persons, their lives, or their characters. We know little of what they said here, but we know something of what they did here. Within the first sixty years they and their children performed an immense work in converting a wilderness into fruitful fields, and in building and maintaining roads, bridges, school-houses, meeting-houses, and mills of various kinds. At the end of that time Buxton, in its general aspect, was almost the same that we see it to-day. During the last sixty years there has been but little change except by the demolition of old and the erection of new buildings.

This great work was theirs. It ought to be better known and appreciated than it is. They have gone; but their work remains as our inheritance and for our enjoyment.

Their circumstances were narrow, and some may think that their lives were joyless and miserable; but I do not so regard it. They served their day and generation faithfully in the position where God had placed them; and we may well believe that they were at least as honest and virtuous, as contented and happy, as ourselves. Most of them came here in the prime of life, vigorous of body, inured to labour, and animated with the hope of making for themselves and for their families comfortable and

independent homes, and of smoothing the pathway of those who should follow them. The men and the women who are animated by such hopes, and who brave perils and encounter hardships for such a purpose, are no ignoble persons. Their strong bodies sustain a corresponding spirit; they are freemen who appreciate their individuality and fear to look no man in the face. Among them you will find heads as sound and hearts as true as anywhere in the world. Pressed by the stern necessity of daily labour for daily bread, they have little time to obtain the knowledge which is to be got from books, or to cultivate the graces, the elegances, and refinements of a life of leisure; yet in the substantial elements of manhood they may be and often are the peers of any man.

Such were the founders of this town; such were the fathers and mothers from whom we are descended. Let us not forget to honour their memories and practise their virtues.

It is mainly from the ranks of such men, and especially from the yeomen who cultivate the soil, that ingenuous youth arise and go forth to fill the highest positions which man can attain.

Thank God for such a perennial source of honour, of virtue, and of power!

Leaving now the first settlers, let us turn once more to their meeting-house. You will remember my statement that on the day of the dedication it was in a very unfinished condition, having neither

pulpit nor pews. On the 22d of October, 1766, more than four years after the dedication, the Proprietors voted that a "Part of y^e^ Floor around the wall of the MeetingHouse Shou^d^ be Laid out for Pew Ground," and a Committee was appointed to lay it out, "& Sell as much of it as will underpin y^e^ Meeting House or more in order to Build a Pulpit and finish y^e^ House as they Shall See fit."

Nearly three years after the passage of this vote, to wit, on the 5th of July, 1769, the Proprietors were warned to meet; and one of the articles of the warrant reads thus: —

"To Chuse a Committee to Lay out y^e^ Pew Ground of the meeting [house] in S^d^ TownShip and Sell y^e^ Same to Such as will Buy in order to underpin the meeting House and Build a Pulpit and to finish the meeting House as far as y^e^ money will Go."

It thus appears that seven years after the meeting-house was opened it was not underpinned, that it had no pulpit and, presumably, no pews. Even as late as 1784, it seems that all the intended finishing had not been completed; but at some unknown time the pulpit and the pews were put in, and it was completed as it stood when taken down.[1]

[1] When I wrote my address I had forgotten that Mr. Williams, on page 19 of his Centennial Address (A. D. 1850), quotes these words of Deacon Thomas Merrill: "It was finished outside, but had only plank seats on blocks till the year 1790, when it was repaired and filled with pews."

I had also overlooked the fact that I have in my possession a deed to Joseph Woodman, Jr. (my grandfather), dated May 3, 1788, from "Jacob Bradbury, Esq^r^., Thomas Bradbury & Snell Wingate being

I will now proceed to describe the old meeting-house in accordance with the best information which I have been able to get after many inquiries. I remember, indistinctly, having been in it twice myself; but I was then a child, and have no remembrance how it looked inside or out. My description is the result of the recollection of five or six persons now living.

By the vote of the Proprietors, as before mentioned, the house was to be forty-five feet long and thirty-five feet wide; and I take it for granted that it was built of that size. There was a projection from the main building which served as a porch and a passage-way to the galleries. The porch had two doors, but they were at the ends, and not in front as they are in this house; it was wide enough to allow persons entering at either door to pass to a central door, which opened upon a broad aisle that led directly to the pulpit, and to the galleries by one of the two flights of stairs.[1]

a committee appointed to finish the Meeting-house," which conveys to him pew No. 3, "according to our plan already agreed to, well finished, together with the remaining part of said house as usual." This last clause is not quite clear, and it seems to me doubtful whether the pew No. 3 was then "well finished."

By another deed, dated November 19, 1798, "Jacob Bradbury, Esquire, Messrs. Thomas Bradbury, Snell Wingate and Nathaniel Hill in the capacity of committee to finish the Meeting-House," convey to said Woodman pew No. 27, "in the Gallary of the Meeting House . . . according as the said Meeting House is now finished." This shows that there were pews in the gallery as well as on the floor.

No notice of this committee appears in the Proprietors' records. The meeting-house was probably "filled with pews" a little earlier than 1790.

[1] The stairs were probably built against the southeasterly wall of the porch, and came to a common landing at the top.

Most of the people probably entered the house by way of the porch, for it was the pleasantest side; and in it and about the doors they would naturally gather for conversation before the minister arrived. There was a door in the easterly end of the main building, and another directly opposite on the westerly end; these doors were midway of their respective sides, but no aisle led directly from the one to the other. There was a passage-way on the westerly end between the house and the graveyard, so that the door on that side was accessible. The pulpit and porch stood towards each other, substantially as they do in this house. There was a singers' gallery opposite the pulpit, and there were two side galleries which were entered from the singers' gallery. There were wall pews all around the main floor of the house, and an aisle running all around between them and the body pews. There was a row of pews on each side of the broad aisle and on each side of the side aisles, making six rows of pews in all.[1]

The seats of the pews, turning on hinges, were raised in time of prayer to give more room for standing; and the clatter which was made when they were dropped at the end of a prayer will never be forgotten by those who have heard it.

[1] The pews on the lower floor were surmounted by a balustrade composed of small turned balusters six or seven inches in height, supporting a rail. The pews in meeting-houses of that day were, I think, at least a foot higher than in modern ones. The pews in the galleries of the Buxton meeting-house were inferior in finish to those below.

Everybody then stood in prayer-time, and did not use the lazy and irreverent form, now common, of sitting while addressing our Heavenly Father. No one recollects that the house was painted inside or out, unless the roof were an exception, which two persons have an impression was red.[1] It was never plastered, and never warmed by artificial heat. One person remembers that there were heavy beams of oak; and the whole frame was probably of oak, the roof, perhaps, excepted. The house was of two stories, the upper tier of windows being specially needed to light the galleries. The length of the old house was about the same as the width of this, but it stood at, or nearly at, a right angle to this house, so that its length and its roof ran across the length of this. If you take off twenty-five feet from the rear of this house you will have left just about the size of the old house, that is, forty-five by thirty-five feet. Then imagine the pulpit standing twenty-five feet in front of this one, with galleries to the right and left of it, and a singers' gallery opposite; with a broad aisle in front of the pulpit and leading to the porch door; with two rows of body pews on each side of the broad aisle, and wall pews all around the house a step higher than the others, and an aisle all around between them and the body pews; with sounding-board above and a window behind the pulpit; with the walls of the lower story ceiled as high as the galleries; with the frame of the building all exposed above

[1] Mr. Fleming Hill feels very sure that it was.

the galleries, including the roof; with an outside door at each end, to the right and left of the pulpit, — and you will have a good general idea of the appearance of the old meeting-house inside. To young eyes the sounding-board seemed suspended so lightly, almost by a thread, that they feared lest it should fall and crush the minister. In the roof swallows, not improbably, sometimes built their nests, as I remember was the case in the old Baptist Meeting-house at Elden's Corner, now called Buxton Centre. Indeed the old meeting-house here and the old one there seem to me to have been constructed on almost exactly the same plan. No cupola, belfry, or other structure rose above the roof of either.

The old house was smaller on the ground than this, as before stated. There was an open space all around it.[1] The area in the rear of the pulpit, between the house and the graveyard fence, is remembered to have been some twenty feet in width, and to have been used as a place for hitching horses. It is now covered by the rear part of this house, which tradition says encroaches upon or covers a few graves at the northwest corner.[2] The open space on the southwesterly end is also remembered as a hitching-place for horses, and as a place where people sometimes ate their luncheons

[1] See Appendix.

[2] "Mr. Sands says that when the new house was built the subject of covering these graves was often spoken of; but no one objected, because (as he thinks) it was then considered an honor to be buried under a church." — *Extracted from a Letter of Mr. Marshall.*

between meetings: it was probably not less than twenty feet wide, and was taken into the graveyard when this house was built.

The precise lines of the foundation of the old house are not known. Perhaps, under the floor of this house, there are indications which would show exactly how the old house stood.[1] The general statement, by those who remember it, is that it stood where this one stands. Mr. John Dunnell Sands thinks it stood farther northeasterly than this one does, and no one can say positively that his impression is not correct.[2] After considering the matter pretty carefully, and looking at all the surroundings, I think that if you take thirty-five feet from the front part of this house you will have almost exactly the size and very nearly the position of the old house. And if it stood ten feet farther to the northeast than this house, still the pulpit, broad aisle, singers' gallery, the westerly gallery, and most of the pews would be within the bounds of this room.[2]

It is interesting to think and pleasant to believe, what there is good ground for believing, that every sermon that has been preached, every prayer that has been offered, every song that has been sung, every baptism that has been administered, and every

[1] Joel M. Marshall, Esq., writes to me under date of December 12, 1886, that, following my suggestion, he made an examination under the meeting-house with a lantern, but found no indication of the foundations of the old house. This is not strange, as the underpinning was probably laid upon the natural surface of the ground. Neither did he find any indication of graves.

[2] See Appendix.

other religious rite or service that has taken place on this spot for one hundred and twenty-four years has been said or done within the walls of the auditorium where we are now assembled. This helps us to realize that we are in the very sanctuary of our ancestors, and almost to feel "the touch of a vanished hand," and to hear "the sound of a voice that is still."

The thought of all that has happened here awakens tender memories of the past and adds dignity and impressiveness to this audience-chamber of the Lord.

Having described the meeting-house, let us linger a little beneath its roof and lay upon its altar our tribute of respect, veneration, and affection.

For sixty years it stood here a monument to Christianity. During that period all of the first settlers, their children, and grandchildren, with scarce an exception, must have sat beneath its roof. In it the Scriptures were read and the songs of Zion heard; in it the preacher expounded the gospel of Christ, exposed the sinfulness of sin, exhorted to repentance and righteousness, pointed out the path of peace, and himself led the way; in it many were admitted as members of the church, and many offered their children in baptism.

Not without emotion do I remember that within its walls my mother thus offered three of her sons to the Lord, and that the rite was performed by him whose sermon I have read in your presence to-day.

Here the afflicted asked prayers for the sick and

the dying, and, when death came, that it might be "sanctified to them for their spiritual and everlasting good."

Here the first settled minister and his colleague were ordained. Here, by way of exchange with the first pastor, preached Deane of Portland, Fairfield of Saco, Fessenden of Fryeburg, Little of Kennebunk, and many others of the reverend clergy. And here, after a service of fifty-eight years within its walls, he who in his young manhood preached the first sermon came in the feebleness of age to preach his farewell sermon,[1] and to leave his benediction upon church and congregation; closing with these words of Saint Paul: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." He saw the house erected. Death gently spared him the pain of seeing it demolished.

The Rev. Levi Loring was ordained in it, October 22, 1817, as the colleague of Dr. Coffin, and preached in it until it ceased to be used.

Of all the heads of families who saw it erected, few, if any, survived to see its removal. Their children and grandchildren had taken the places which they once occupied, and many of these, from childhood, had known no other place of worship than this. Many were attached to it by the holiest and tenderest of memories, and could not have seen its destruction without deep emotion.

[1] It was preached October 22, 1820.

Dear old Meeting-house! Have we not done well to recall it, to enter its portals, to linger beneath its roof, mingle with its worshippers, and revive the sacred memories which enshrine it? Blessed in its influence while it stood, its influence yet survives and falls upon us now.

Having spoken to you of the early inhabitants and their meeting-house, it is proper that I now speak of their minister, — the first settled minister in this town.

Paul Coffin was born in Newbury, Mass., on the 27th of January, 1738,[1] in the old Coffin mansion, which was also the birthplace of his father and grandfather. The house still stands, and is within the present limits of Newburyport. He was graduated from Harvard College in "the glorious year '59" (1759), as he called it in allusion to the conquest of Quebec by General Wolfe in that year. In college he was noticed and distinguished for his literary acquirements and correct deportment. During the years 1759 and 1760 he taught school in the towns of Kingston, N. H., and Wells and Bidde ford in this State; and doubtless pursued his theological studies at the same time with Joseph Secomb, Daniel Little, and Moses Morrill, who were then the ministers in those towns.

On Sunday, the eighth day of February, 1761, then being twenty-three years old, he preached for the first time in this town.[2] When the meeting-

[1] 1737, Old Style.

[2] This fact appears in his sermon No. 975, preached in 1808.

house was dedicated, in 1762, he had not yet been ordained and was not married; but was married on the 10th of November, 1763, to Mary, daughter of Nathaniel Gorham, of Charlestown, Mass., who was a sea-captain of that place.

Under date of October 10, 1761, the settlers signed a petition which asked that a meeting of the Proprietors should be held, which seems to have embodied also a call to Mr. Coffin to settle with them as their minister.

The desired meeting was held November 12–16, 1761, and it was voted to give him "fifty Pounds Sterling a Year & So Yearly if he See Cause to Settle with us in the work of the ministry," and a further sum of £100 was voted as an "Encouragement" for him to settle with them. He continued to preach here, but did not formally accept the call for more than a year after it was given.

On the 11th of January, 1763, Joseph Woodman and Timothy Hasaltine, who had been chosen as a committee to wait upon Mr. Coffin with an invitation from the Proprietors to settle with them as a minister of the gospel, reported that they had done so and had received his answer in the affirmative; and they then requested the Proprietors to appoint a day in the following March for the ordination, and to choose a committee to represent them upon that occasion.

In compliance with this request, a meeting of the Proprietors was held on the 10th of February, 1763, when it was voted that Captain George Jewett,

Thomas Gage, Esq., and Joseph Leavitt[1] should be a committee "To assist in ordaining Mr. Paul Coffin as a minister of the Gospell & Pastor of the Church that may be Gathered at said Narragansett, on the third Wednesday of March next."

It is difficult to see the reason for selecting the month of March, when snows are often deep and the roads bad. It was certainly no pleasure-trip for the Rev. Messrs. Little and Hemmenway and the gentlemen with them, when, coming on snowshoes from Wells, they lost their way and were obliged to spend the night before the ordination in the woods and snow on the other side of the river.

The ordination took place March 16, 1763, and probably within the bounds of this room. A council of the following-named churches convened on that day, and probably in a house then owned and occupied by Timothy Hasaltine,[2] and which has recently been removed. It stood within the present limits of the graveyard, and was of one story, with a chimney in the middle. It faced towards the south, and a road then ran in front of it, — in one direction to where Mr. Nathan Woodman now lives, and to the Duck Pond Road in the other direction.[3]

[1] Thomas Gage and George Jewett were of Rowley. Joseph Leavitt may have been Joseph of York, or his son Joseph of Buxton.

[2] Charles Coffin (son of Rev. Paul) says that *Deacon* Hasaltine was "from Bradford, Mass., and settled within a few rods of the meeting-house."

[3] This road was "three rods wide on the Southerly Side of the Sixth lot on the . . . letter G." See Goodwin's Narraganset No. 1, page 191.

The first business of the council was to see that a church was properly organized. The church which now exists here had its birth on that day, and consisted of seven men, namely: —

PAUL COFFIN, *the pastor elect.*

THOMAS BRADBURY.	TIMOTHY HASALTINE.
THOMAS ATKINSON.	JOHN NASON.
JACOB BRADBURY.	SAMUEL LEAVIT.

It seems a little singular that no woman was a member of the church when it was organized. More than a year elapsed before one was admitted, and more than another year before the admission of the second one.

The church having been formed, the council proceeded to the ordination of the pastor.

The pastors and delegates of the following-named churches were present, namely: The First and Second Churches in Wells, the Church in Biddeford, the Church in Pepperrellborough (now Saco), and, as stated in the record of the council, "a messenger from the Second Church in Scarborough." Parson Elkins, the minister of the last-named church, in a record made by him, says that he was not able to go, but that Mr. Nathaniel Milliken and Mr. Jonathan Andrews were chosen as delegates and went. A committee of the Proprietors, as voted, was probably present. Charles Coffin, a brother of the pastor, was there.

At the ordination the Rev. Mr. Fairfield of Pepperrellborough began with prayer, the Rev. Mr.

Little of Wells preached, the Rev. Mr. Morrill of Biddeford gave the charge, the Rev. Mr. Hemmenway of Wells the right hand of fellowship, and the Rev. Mr. Morrill concluded with prayer.

Mr. Little, in his record, says that the public services began at 12 o'clock, were "Performed with decency & Gravity suitable to their Nature and Importance," that the congregation was dismissed a quarter of an hour after two, and that a "very Plentiful Entertainment" was provided "for the Councill and Strangers." It was provided by John Nason and Timothy Hasaltine, who on that day or soon after were elected the first deacons of the church.

In regard to Mr. Coffin, I beg leave now to read some extracts from a volume edited by your townsman, Mr. Marshall: —

"Thus was settled for life a young man born and educated in polished and literary society, with less than thirty families in the town, most of whom were covered from the inclemency of the weather by log houses, without a single educated parishioner. . . .

"He was settled for life; and here through life, on a small and at times poorly paid salary, he remained and brought up a numerous family. During the eight years' war of the Revolution he did not receive twenty dollars in specie. But for his farm and his own personal labour thereon he would at times not have been able to furnish wholesome food and decent clothing for his family. His sons, when old enough, assisted him on the farm; and his daughters, besides performing the ordinary work of the household, had practical knowledge of carding, spinning, and weaving.

"In the year 1792 he was invited to succeed the learned and distinguished Dr. John Tucker, in his native parish."

This invitation was very gratifying, but his parishioners wished him to remain with them, and he did not accept it.

"In May, 1799, it was his distinguished privilege to preach the annual election sermon in Boston before His Honor Moses Gill, Esq., Lieutenant-Governor, the Honorable the Council, Senate, and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.[1]

"In 1812 the title of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by his Alma Mater, Harvard College. . . .

"'Dr. Coffin was a learned man, and was able to read the Scriptures in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, to which he added a knowledge of the French. . . .

"'With the most enlightened part of the community, as a preacher and a gentleman he was not only acceptable but sought after and admired. No one in his vicinity, during his whole ministry, was more so. . . .

"'From a wilderness when he came to Buxton, he lived to see it one of the most pleasant and beautiful towns in the State, containing nearly three thousand inhabitants; and Maine, from a poor and distant province, he lived to see an independent State, and to aid and assist in the foundation of Bowdoin College.'"[2]

His wife died December 20, 1803, more than seventeen years before him. She is said to have been "a woman of good sense and accomplished manners, and of early and constant piety;" and also "full of

[1] His son Charles says: "He rather avoided than sought distinction; his publications were nothing more than an election sermon, two or three ordination sermons, and a few on other occasions."

[2] These extracts are from a brief memoir by his son Charles.

benevolence and practical charity to the poor and afflicted."

He died June 6, 1821. Well do I remember that calm June evening when, with my mother and other sorrowing relatives, in his pleasant chamber study where so many studious hours had been spent, I stood, a child, by the bedside of the aged and dying pastor. Nor less well do I remember that other day, the 8th of June, serene and beautiful, when, followed by a long procession on foot of relatives, parishioners, and friends, he was borne upon a bier, resting upon the shoulders of those who had known and honoured him, to his last resting-place under the shadow of that old meeting-house which some present have not forgotten, and in which for so many years he had broken the bread of life. It is said that he was exact and particular in all his transactions, and that, conscious of his own good-will to his fellow-men, he never appeared to feel that he had a personal enemy. Somewhat prior to 1800 he was easy in his circumstances; and when his colleague was chosen he, unrequested, released the parish from the payment of his salary.

"Dr. Coffin, in his person, was of full middling size, erect, and perfectly well formed; his countenance was rather of the Roman cast, expressive of intelligence and benignity." Some still live, I think, who remember to have seen him in his old age upon his white horse, in cocked hat, white cravat, and knee-breeches, and probably wearing a queue. His portrait represents him in bands,

which it was then the custom of the clergy to wear in the pulpit, — a custom which he probably always followed.

The influence of a long life so spent as was his here in the teaching and in the practice of all the virtues which become a man and a Christian cannot be overestimated. The living and recognized influence is great; but greater is the unseen and unknown, but pervasive, influence which goes out from a good man and descends from generation to generation in ever-widening circles.

He settled on the farm now occupied by his grandson, Charles Little Coffin. There his fourteen children were born, of whom eleven lived to mature age and of whom nine were married.

The grandson just mentioned and his children are the only descendants of the pastor now living in this town; and three only of his male descendants now bear the family name.[1]

The large two-story house in which he lived and died was built by him probably in 1763. It stood about one hundred feet south of the house now occupied by his above-named grandson. It stood end to the road, and there was an outer door at that end; but the front door, on the south side, opened pleasantly upon the orchard and garden-lot, whose boundaries have not been changed since my recollection. In front of the house were apple and pear trees which, when in full vigour, as I remember them,

[1] One of these three has died since my address was delivered, leaving no issue.

were pleasant to look upon. The easterly end of the house-lot has been used as a garden, as I know, for more than sixty years, and probably for more than a hundred. I hope that it is as well kept now as in the days of my boyhood.

The good parson had probably, at an early day, a better apple orchard than was then common, for Stephen Longfellow of Gorham made this record: "1774– April 26. Went to Narragansett and purchased 16 apple trees of Mr. Coffin @ 3/ O. T. per tree."

The house stood somewhat back from the travelled way, leaving an inviting grass-plat between the end door and the road. The front door, opening upon the lawn, was not accessible to carriages, but was reached through a handsome gateway.

The parson's study was the southwesterly room in the second story. The west window overlooked the road, a field, orchard, and woods, and perhaps, when the forest was cut away, afforded a glimpse of the river. From it the White Mountains could be seen in clear weather; and from the front windows one looked into the pleasant lawn, with its fruit-trees, and to the not distant meeting-house.[1] The house was of two stories, with a great chimney in the middle. There were on the first floor two rooms in front, with a large kitchen, an entry-way, and one or more small rooms in the rear. I remember the vast kitchen fireplace with an oven at the back, and room enough for two persons

[1] Distance about one third of a mile.

to sit comfortably along one of the jambs. A dresser with bright pewter ornamented one side of the kitchen.

When Captain David Coffin, a son of the preacher, built the house now occupied by his son Charles, the old one was removed about fifty rods, and now stands near the house of Mr. Nelson Sanderson, but on the other side of the way. Externally it is little changed from what it was when built. The removal made it necessary, of course, to take down the old chimney and build a new one. The study was the northwesterly chamber as the house now stands.

Many have been the regrets that it was ever removed from the pleasant spot where it was built, where friends and relatives and all the clergy in this part of the State, drawn thither by the hospitality, culture, and refinement of the learned pastor and his accomplished wife, enjoyed with them the sweet content of a sympathetic and delightful social intercourse; where the parishioners came with their troubles, their joys, and their griefs, and went not empty away; where children were born, and grew to manhood and womanhood under the care, nurture, and pious instructions of their parents. Marriage, birth, death, the joys and the sorrows of life, had made that old house sacred. About its hearthstone lingered memories of all that is dearest, sweetest, and holiest in life, — memories that are of power to touch the heart as with a coal from off the altar of the living God, and to en-

kindle, preserve, and sanctify the purest devotion to home, to country, and to God.

I have carried you back into the dim days of the past, but the past is so indissolubly linked with the present that I cannot speak of the one without touching upon the other.

If Paul Coffin had not preached here on the 15th of August, 1762, we should not be celebrating the one hundred and twenty-fourth anniversary of that event to-day. If a meeting-house had not stood here then, this one would not stand here now.

This house was erected in 1822, and has already stood longer than its predecessor. Externally it is the same as when built, except that by the generosity of a native of the town, Colonel Isaac Emery, a bell has found its fit place in the belfry, and now, on Sabbath days, sends its greeting and invitation to the people. Internally, I miss the loftier pulpit and the singers' gallery of my boyhood. I notice too that the wall pews which were elevated by a step above the others have been brought down to the same level. It is not for me to criticise these changes, but it would, to my eye, seem more natural and more pleasing if they had not been made.

That this house is now in good repair and attractive in its appearance is largely due to the zealous exertions of one who, though no longer residing here, shows that tender ties still bind her to this home of her younger days. I need not name her. She is known and honoured by us all.[1]

[1] Mrs. Margaret (Motley) Bartlett, widow of the Rev. Joseph Bartlett. She was present at the delivery of my address.

But the changes which I notice in the building itself are not those which touch me most. As I look around I see not one who helped to plan and to build this house; not one who was then engaged in the active business of life; not one who was then a member of this church. But as I look back through the dim vista of years that have gone, their vanished forms, as in a vision, are again before me. Mr. Loring stands tall, lank, and dark in the pulpit, and *Master* Brown sits with his bass-viol in the gallery, — the one making our hearts to quake with the terrors of the law, and the other soothing them with the sweet tones of music. Once more, walking up these aisles, sitting in these pews, standing reverently in prayer, I see the men and the women who fifty and sixty years ago occupied the places which their children and grandchildren occupy now. It was a goodly sight to look upon them as they gathered here and filled every pew on Sunday morning. Many of them, in personal appearance, in all that gives support, dignity, and grace to conduct and to character, were at least the equals, and many who knew them will say greatly the superiors, of us their descendants.

It would be pleasant to hold them yet longer in vision, and to recall their names; but even as I speak their shadowy forms arise, depart, and vanish forever into the silent land.

"All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."

But all is not gone. Life and its duties continue; and though generation follows generation

into the "dark backward and abysm of time," yet other generations, in God's good providence, come to fill the places of the departed, and to take up and carry on the work of their hands. Here, during one hundred and twenty-four years, the doctrines of Christ have been preached; and the voice of praise, of prayer, and of thanksgiving has not ceased to be heard. The altar then here reared by our ancestors, cherished by them, and guarded by their children, has come down to us; and the fire then kindled upon it has not yet gone out.

Let us, their descendants, see to it, and especially let those whose lines have fallen in these pleasant places see to it, that the altar becomes not desolate; that its fire goes not out; but that, in the future as in the past, the divine flame shall be a lamp to the feet and a light to the path of erring man, — a "shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

APPENDIX.

I.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. There are two likenesses of Dr. Coffin here presented. They are both after a portrait of him which was painted by John Brewster, a deaf-and-dumb brother of Dr. Royall Brewster. One, the frontispiece, is an engraving on steel by Frederick T. Stuart; and the other, facing page 7, is copied from a photograph of the painting.

2. A fac-simile of the last page of the Sermon, facing p. 36.

3. Another portrait, facing page 37, of which nothing need be said except that it is a copy from a photograph which was taken in December, 1886.

4. The full-page view of the meeting-house, facing page 44, is from a photograph which was taken June 10, 1887.

5. The half-page view of the meeting-house, facing page 67, is from a photograph which was taken some years since by Simon Towle. It is here introduced to show the house of *Deacon* Hasaltine, which faintly appears

in the background. It was in this house, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the "Plentiful Entertainment" was given on ordination day, 1763.

6. The view of Dr. Coffin's house, facing page 67, is copied from a photograph taken some years ago by Mr. Towle. It now stands about fifty rods distant from the original site. It correctly represents the main house except as to the chimney, which was taken down and rebuilt when the house was moved. It is now, I suppose, the oldest house in Buxton.

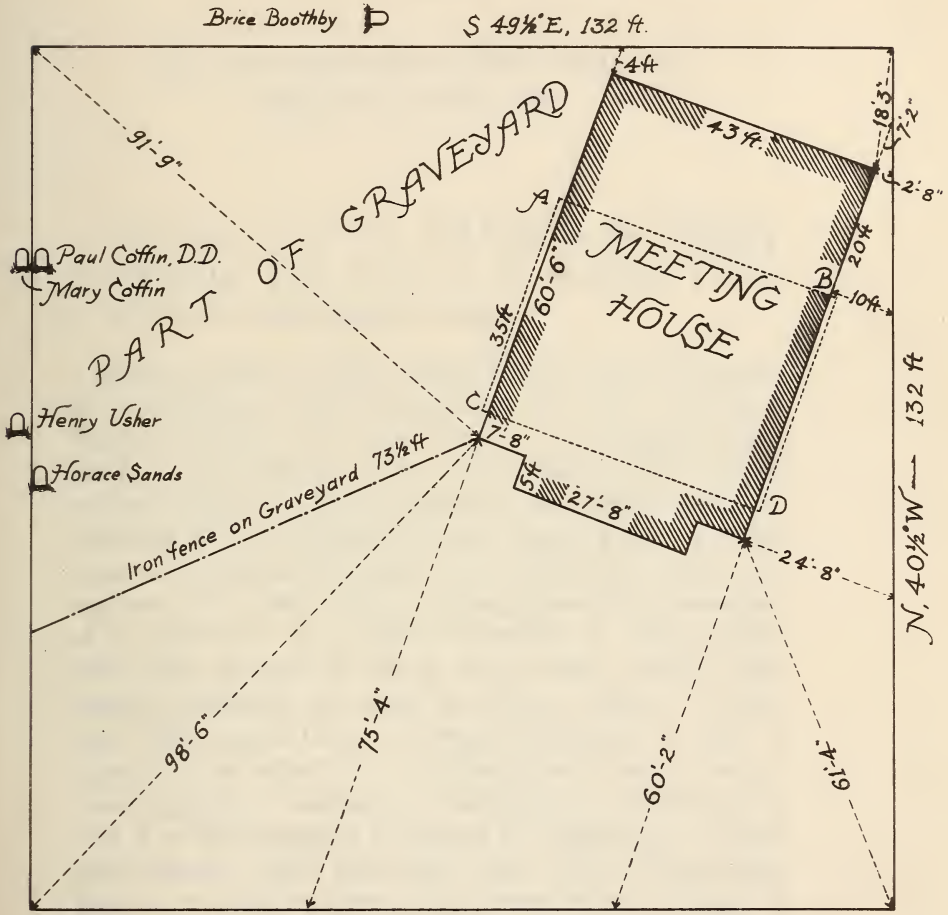
7. The plans of the meeting-house lot, following this page, are after surveys and maps made by Daniel Dennett.

Plan, showing the location of the

SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HOUSE,

BUXTON, MAINE.

With reference to the boundaries of the lot of land upon which it is situated.



From a survey by Daniel Dennett, August, 1887.

10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Scale of Feet.

II.

THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE AND THE MEETING-HOUSE LOT.

On page 217 of Vol. XXXVI. in the Registry of Deeds for York County is the record of a deed of which the following is a copy: —

Know all men by these presents that I Isaac Hancock of y^e^ Township called Narragansett N° 1 in y^e^ County of York & Province of y^e^ Mass^tts^ bay in New-England Gent^l^ for & in consideration of y^e^ sum of ten pounds Lawfull money to me in hand paid before y^e^ Ensealing hereof by Jeremiah Hill of Biddeford Gent^l^ Joseph Levet of York yeoman & Joseph Woodman of y^e^ afores^d^ Township Narragansett N° 1 Gent^l^ all in y^e^ County afores^d^ & a Committee of y^e^ Proprietors of y^e^ afores^d^ Township of Narragansett have given granted & sold & do by these presents fully freely & absolutely give grant & sell unto them y^e^ s^d^ Jeremiah Hill Joseph Leavet & Joseph Woodman in their s^d^ capacity & on behalf of y^e^ s^d^ Proprietors a certain tract of Land lying in s^d^ township of Narragansett containing one acre & an half bounded as follows viz^t^ begining at a Birch stub standing Eight rods south west from y^e^ North East End of y^e^ Grantors Home Lott where he now Dwells & on y^e^ South East side of s^d^ Lott adjoining to y^e^ four rod road that leads to Pleasant point Landing thenc runing

North west thirty rods thence runing North East Eight rods thence runing South East thirty rods thence runing South west Eight rods to y^e^ first bounds s^d^ tract being Intended for y^e^ benefit of y^e^ afores^d^ Proprietors to build a meeting house upon

To have & to hold y^e^ s^d^ Granted & bargained Premises with all y^e^ Priviledges & commodities to y^e^ same belonging to them y^e^ s^d^ Jeremiah Hill Joseph Leavett & Joseph Woodman in their s^d^ capacity & to y^e^ use & benefit of y^e^ s^d^ Proprietors forever. [Here follow the usual covenants of warranty, etc.] In witness whereof I y^e^ s^d^ Isaac Hancock have hereunto set my hand & seal this Eighth Day of April in y^e^ first year of his Majesties Reign Anno Domini 1761

his
ISAAC + HANCOCK [L. S.]
mark

Signed seal^d^ & Deliv^d^ in presence of us
JOHN ELDEN
SAMUEL MERRILL.

YORK ss BIDDEFORD April 28^th^ 1761

then y^e^ within named Isaac Hancock personally appear^d^ & acknow^d^ y^e^ within Ins^t^ to be his free act & Deed before me JONATHAN BEAN Just Peac.[1]

[1] The Proprietors, under a vote passed July 22, 1760, probably procured from John Cole three acres out of his "home lot" No. 8 of Range G, First Division, as a site for the meeting-house, and with a view, perhaps, of using most of it for a graveyard. I suppose that this three acres was bounded in part by the present common, and that the intention was to build the meeting-house on or near the spot where the Brewster house now stands.

It would seem that afterwards the site of the present meeting-house was preferred, and that thereupon the Proprietors took a deed for an acre and a half from Hancock and gave him by way of exchange the three acres which had been at first selected. In the Probate Records relating to Hancock's estate this item appears in the Inventory: "Three acres of land lying near the Meeting-house, which M^r^ Hancock had in exchange for the land on which the meeting-house stands."

This acre and a half takes a strip eight rods wide from the easterly half of the northeasterly end of Lot 2, and from the whole of the northeasterly end of Lot 3, of Range E of the First Division of lots; which lots were twenty rods in width. See Dennett's map of Buxton, 1870, and Goodwin's Narraganset No. 1.

The original lines and corners of these lots are not known; but in order to determine the bounds of the meeting-house lot as nearly as possible, I requested Mr. Daniel Dennett, in August, 1886, to make a survey of it, which he did in the following September, and reported to me, substantially, as follows: —

"Within I enclose a sketch of the meeting-house lot. I have two plats made of the size you wished. . . . Perhaps I spent more time in finding the lot than you expected, but I could find no mark or monument in the vicinity that I considered reliable. Mr. Charles Coffin showed a point in the graveyard which he thought was a corner of the lot, but, by running, it proved to be erroneous. I called on Mr. J. Dunnell Sands, and he said he could show me a corner on his lot, on the east side of the road leading to the Peter Emery place, that was settled by Court as being on the head line of these lots. To find the course to run this line I run out the Pleasant Point road, having two points, one at the Chase house and one at the end of the old Nat. Came house, as being on the southeast line of said road. Having found the exact course of this road, I proceeded to run at a right angle from the Sands corner to the Meeting-house Lot. This line crosses the ground doorstep of the Brewster House, and comes within thirty-two inches of the northwest [northeast]

corner of the meeting-house, and goes about eighteen feet into the graveyard. I am satisfied the survey is as correct as can be made."

In another letter he says: "I marked the corners with small hubs driven down nearly level with the ground."

The accompanying plan is the result of this survey. In August, 1887, Mr. Dennett, at my request, made another survey of eight rods square at the northwesterly end of the meeting-house lot, which square includes the site of the existing meeting-house and of the one which preceded it. By this survey the precise position of the present meeting-house is accurately determined, as will be seen by the larger of the two plans herewith presented. In December, 1887, I caused four pieces of granite to be made of a proper size and shape for setting at the corners of this lot; and in that month they were carefully placed, under the direction of Joel M. Marshall, Esq., so that the centres of the tops of the stones occupy the places of the "hubs" which were set by Mr. Dennett. As long as these corners endure the exact site of the present meeting-house can be determined, even if it should be as utterly obliterated as the site of the old one is. I believe that the survey of the meeting-house lot is as accurate as can be made. It must stand as correct unless it can be impeached by higher authority.

I had these surveys made in the hope that they might help to determine the position of the old

meeting-house in relation to that of the present one, and I will now give my views on that question.

We may take it for granted that those who laid the foundations of the old house selected what they thought was the best site upon the lot. If the old house, as we may reasonably suppose, was thus placed, every one I think will upon examination admit that the present one occupies the best site, and that therefore the builders of the new house placed it as nearly as was practicable upon the site of the old one, and that it consequently covers almost, if not quite, the very ground upon which the first one stood. This reasonable supposition is somewhat confirmed by the fact that, with a single exception, those who remember the old house agree that it stood, to the best of their recollection, where the new one stands. But from this general view let us descend to particulars.

The length of the old house, speaking generally, was in a northeast and southwest direction, and the length of the present one is in a northwest and southeast direction; so that the length of the one was at or nearly at a right angle to that of the other.

There is a current tradition that in building the present house it was extended so far northwesterly that a portion of the graveyard and one or more graves were encroached upon. To make this encroachment as little as practicable the present house was probably extended southeasterly somewhat beyond the line of the old one, but it could not well

be extended far in that direction on account of the descending ground. Mr. Marshall reasonably conjectures that the slight depression which is noticeable along the southwesterly side of the present house was caused by scooping gravel out of the passage-way between the old house and the old graveyard fence, for the purpose of placing it in front of the house to make a tolerably level approach for carriages. Even now the approach is not entirely level. As the house could not be well extended farther in that direction, it is not improbable that there was some encroachment upon the graveyard by the extension of the building in the opposite direction.

On the supposition that the old house stood only five feet farther back than the present one, I indicate an assumed position for it on the accompanying plan by the letters A, B, C, D, and the dotted lines which connect them. It will be remembered that the old house was forty-five feet long, and that the present one is forty-three feet wide, so that the easterly and westerly assumed lines fall one foot outside of the width of the present one. It will be seen by the plan that the corner B is nine feet from the easterly boundary of the meeting-house lot; and, therefore, if the old meeting-house stood more than nine feet easterly of that corner, it would encroach upon land where it had no right to be. We cannot believe that the Proprietors would put any part of the meeting-house over the northeasterly line when there was ample room and good ground to place it

anywhere from one to fifty feet westerly of that line, and thus commit a trespass without any conceivable reason for so doing. It is more reasonable to suppose that they left at least nine feet between the line and the house, and thus gave room for carriages to pass, on their own land, from the northeasterly to the northwesterly side, where we are told there was an open space between the house and the graveyard fence.

Assuming, as we must, that Mr. Dennett's survey is correct, until its authority is satisfactorily controverted, we are then justified in assuming that the old house could not have stood more than nine feet easterly of the present one, and also in assuming that the position represented by the letters A, B, C, D is probably not far out of the way. Even if it stood nine feet easterly, yet only the easterly row of pews and easterly aisle, or a little more, would have been outside of the bounds of the present house.

While those who remember the old house generally concur in the statement that it stood where the present one stands, yet one person, Mr. John Dunnell Sands, is positive that it stood twenty-one or twenty-two feet farther to the northeast. He said to me that it stood at least half of the width of the present one in that direction. Consequently he thinks that the old house stood more easterly than Dennett's line by twelve to thirteen feet. If so, and it were still on the meeting-house lot, then Dr. Brewster put the front of his house some five to six feet on the lot, and was a trespasser to that extent.

Now, though the front yard of the house is partly on the meeting-house lot by Dennett's survey, it is hardly supposable that Dr. Brewster would venture to put any part of the house itself upon it; but he might venture, as he seems to have done, to place it within six or seven feet of the line, as then he would save an entrance on his own land to his front door. This consideration tends to confirm the correctness of Mr. Dennett's survey.

Mr. Sands assumes that Mr. Dennett's survey is wrong, though he does not attempt to verify the correctness of his memory by a single fact. A boy of thirteen may carry to old age an accurate memory of many things, but I am convinced from my own observation, and that of others in similar cases, that no man, with general recollections only to guide him, can with any degree of certainty fix within ten feet the position of a building which stood on open, unfenced ground, and which has been demolished sixty-five years, even if he has been on the spot every week during all those years; and especially if, as in this case, during the long interim nothing has called his special attention to the subject.

Mr. Sands is now (1887) living at the age of seventy-eight years, and was about thirteen years old when the old meeting-house was taken down. His life has been spent in sight of and within three quarters of a mile of the spot where it stood. His statement therefore deserves the careful attention which I have given to it.

After making a personal inspection of the premises, and carefully considering the facts above stated and others of minor importance which I have not mentioned, I come to the conclusion that the assumed position of the old house, as represented on the plan, is as nearly right as any assumed position can be, — certainly more nearly right than the one which Mr. Sands would give it, — and that there is reasonable ground for believing that this assumed position does not vary more than five feet in any direction from the true one. From a careful examination and comparison of the somewhat meagre, imperfect, and conflicting statements of those who remember the old house, aided by Mr. Dennett's survey, I have endeavoured to give as good an idea of the edifice and of its position as the nature of the case will permit. I trust that my endeavour has not been entirely unsuccessful, and that the result of my investigations will have some interest for a few at least of the present and of the future inhabitants of the town.

It may be thought, and with good show of reason, that I have spent more time upon this question than its importance demands; but having undertaken to establish the probable position of the old house, I have tried to reach a reasonably satisfactory conclusion. It adds so much to the dignity and impressiveness of the present house to have a well-grounded belief that many of our ancestors and all the early inhabitants of the town were gathered as worshippers within the space enclosed by its walls,

that I have spared neither time, labour, nor expense in endeavouring to make the probability of it as clear as all attainable information will permit.

The first burials at the meeting-house were probably made soon after its erection, and upon the meeting-house lot, and before the graveyard was enclosed. As only a small part of the meeting-house lot has ever been used for burial, it is probable that the first graveyard fence extended ten rods to the northwest of it, carrying the same width, — eight rods, — which would include the westerly half of the northeasterly end of Lot No. 2, would add half an acre to that part of the meeting-house lot which has been used as a burial place, and would make a yard of about five eighths of an acre in extent. There is no record of a deed of this half-acre, and perhaps the owner, with or without compensation, allowed it to be taken, but never gave a deed. All the oldest graves are within the bounds above described.

When the road from Usher's bridge to the meeting-house was laid out, in 1808, the graveyard fence was probably brought down to that road; and after the present meeting-house was built, if not before, the line of fence which now starts from the northeasterly corner of the meeting-house was probably moved from the head line of Lot No. 2, thus adding a small triangular piece of ground to this part of the graveyard. It will, I think, be found that all the graves on this triangular piece have been made since the erection of the new house.

The northwest and southwest sides of this house now form a part of the boundaries of the graveyard. It is not remembered by any one that the corresponding sides of the old house formed any part of such boundary, but it is remembered that there were open spaces on each of those sides. As no conceivable reason exists why the old graveyard fence should touch the old house unless to make it a part of the boundary, and as no one remembers that it did touch it, the legitimate presumption is that the open spaces just mentioned formed one continuous passage-way between the house and the graveyard, and, as the other two sides were never enclosed, that the house stood free and unfenced on the plain.

In the preparation of what I have written in regard to the old meeting-house I am greatly indebted to Mr. Marshall. Of those who remember the old house he has seen and talked with Mr. Fleming Hill, Mr. John D. Sands, Mrs. Jane Patten, Mr. William Sawyer, Mr. Ansel Merrill, and Miss Deborah Hopkinson.

By letters too numerous to mention or to make extracts from, he has given me the results of his interviews with them, and very kindly and patiently answered my many inquiries. But for his interest in the subject and kind assistance, I should hardly have ventured upon the minute study that I have made of the meeting-house and its site. He is now collecting information in regard to the church, its pastors and members, which I have reason to hope will be given to the public at no distant day.

I am also indebted to Mrs. Jane (Wentworth) Patten and to Mrs. Mehetabel (Woodman) Elden for their interesting recollections. Mrs. Nancy (Wentworth) Cressey, in writing to me on behalf of her aunt Patten under date of August 2, 1886, says: —

"Since receiving your last letter I have seen Mr. Blaisdel Flanders, who spent the days of his boyhood at the Lower Corner, and was ten years old when the old church was taken down. Nearly all his statements coincide with Aunt Jane's. He thinks the house was not plastered, and that the roof could be seen from the inside. He agrees with Aunt Jane about the two doors in the main building and the square wall pews on the sides and an aisle next to them all around the house, and the broad aisle from porch to pulpit, with two tiers of pews on each side. The body pews were not on a level with the floor as in the body of the house, but raised one step. He remembers about the two doors and the two flights of stairs in the porch, but thinks there was no door *between* the stairs. He says that the boys used to run in at one door, up one flight of stairs and down the other, and out the door. He remembers also that there were windows in the galleries, the same as below.

Mr. Flanders and Aunt Jane think the house was longer from porch to pulpit than the other way, and that the present house sits on the same spot and same way as the old one.[1] As the removing of the house was in contempla-

[1] Most of those who remember the old house are at fault in thinking that the length of it corresponded with the direction of the broad aisle. One reason for this error of memory probably is that this aisle, by its superior width, by its division of the house into two equal parts, and by the stately walk of the minister through it from porch to pulpit, was invested with a dignity which to youthful minds made it seem longer than it was.

Another reason probably is that though the minister stands at the

tion repairs were not kept up; the doors were left open, and sheep would sometimes go in. When the house was struck by lightning Aunt Jane remembers hearing your mother say, or insinuate, that she thought it was a judgment sent upon the people for not taking better care of the house."

From other letters of Mrs. Cressey I make the following extracts: —

"Aunt thinks that the wall pews were square, but that the others, including the wing pews on one side of the pulpit (the side nearest the cemetery) were long. . . . There was an open space on the west side of the house, so that people could walk or ride, Aunt Jane thinks, all around the house."

end of the present house and looks lengthways through it, yet it is from a pulpit which is nearly on the same spot and which faces the same way as the old one; so that the memory as it goes back through sixty-five years can scarcely recall the difference in the position of the two houses as to length and breadth.

Mr. Sands distinctly remembers that the length of the old house was across the length of the present one; and even if he had no recollection about it or if his recollection coincided with that of Mrs. Patten and Mr. Flanders, yet I should have no doubt concerning it; for if the length of the old house corresponded with the length of this one, then, after deducting eight to ten feet for aisles, there would have been but twenty-five to twenty-seven feet to divide among the six rows of pews. If it stood the other way, there would be thirty-five to thirty-seven feet for the six rows. The wall pews were probably about four feet deep from the aisle by four to five the other way, with seats, I suppose, on three sides. Deducting eight to ten feet for aisles and eight feet for the wall pews on opposite sides, we have left twenty-seven to twenty-nine feet for the four rows of body pews, giving from six and three quarters to seven and one quarter feet for each pew. Moreover, when the old meeting-house was built it was the prevalent style to place the pulpit on the side and not at the end of the house. So was it placed in the "Old South" in Boston, in the Congregational Meeting-house in Gorham, and in most others of that day.

I also learn from Mr. Marshall that Mrs. Patten "says that Dr. Coffin, while she attended church, invariably went round to the northeast door of the porch and entered so as to walk the whole length of the [broad] aisle to the pulpit."

From Mrs. Elden's letters in answer to my questions I make the following extracts: —

"Never any paint inside or out. . . . No plastering. . . . Open to roof. . . . Galleries on three sides. . . . There was a porch where all went, — one attraction, publishments. . . . Mother went out at the porch door. I followed the multitude out front [northeast door], wanting to see how the houses of York and Lancaster looked, as Usher called them. . . . When the schoolhouse was being built Mr. Asa Brown, the schoolmaster, instructed us children in the meeting-house. Sometimes he would go into the front gallery and hear us read loud, so he could hear. We sat in pews in mid-house. . . . No door of the old meeting-house opened towards Chase's. . . . For convenience there must have been an alley between the house and graveyard. . . . Mother has told me that she with other girls would go out there between meetings to eat their luncheons. . . . As you went in from the porch Captain Elden's pew was on the right, Emery's on the left [wall pews] one step higher than the body pews. . . . Father's pew was next back of your uncle Charles Coffin's."

III.

DR. COFFIN'S MANUSCRIPT SERMONS.

Most of Dr. Coffin's sermons were given to the Maine Historical Society by his granddaughter, Mrs. Almira Boardman (Coffin) Foss.

Among these is one numbered 975, preceded by the following statement: —

"Composed May 12, 1808. For my own hearers peculiarly.

"I have now preached in this town more than forty-seven years, *i. e.*, from Feb. 8, 1761, to the present time. In all this space of duration, my aim has been not to please men, but God; not to deliver the councils of men, but the gospel of Christianity; not to vary with the times and the different prejudices of hearers, but to cleave to that Divine Word which liveth the same to-day and yesterday. I have endeavored to be plain, open, and explicit, whether speaking on grace or duty, faith or works. And I have even feared lest, aiming to give knowledge, I have too much neglected to excite affection. And yet there is reason to apprehend that Christian knowledge is almost as rare among us as Christian affection and Christian temper. In a town circumstanced for religion as this now is, it is indeed to be expected that prejudices will arise and

prevail, and misunderstandings be many, and some censures and hard words be heard; but that a man should be thought to preach human deeds as the meritorious cause of eternal life, after he had through forty-seven years taught salvation through Christ alone, was hardly to be expected. And yet it seems I have been judged thus. Many others — by what means I do not fully know — have learned to believe that I denied conversion, or a sanctified change of heart. Now, such gross misrepresentations spread among us must be supposed to produce effects injurious to souls. They tend strongly to prevent the good and saving effects of the gospel preached. They tend to promote painful feelings in the heart and temper, injurious to religion. And surely the times urge us to remove out of the way every hindrance to the success of the gospel, and to embrace every help to promote it. I will, then, once more, in a manner as plain as possible, aim to show you that salvation is not of works, and that without a religious change of temper no man can be saved."

IV.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BUXTON.

Below is a list of all printed books and pamphlets and of all engraved maps relating to Buxton, and of the printed sermons of Dr. Coffin, so far as they are known to me. The list does not give title-pages, etc., in full, but only such a description as will serve to identify the works.

1. A Discourse on the Excellency of the Christian Character, delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Ebenezer Coffin, in Brunswick, Maine, June 23, 1794. By Rev. Paul Coffin. Newburyport, 1794.
2. "A Sermon preached before his Honor Moses Gill, Esq., Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable the Council, Senate, and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, May 29, 1799, being the day of General Election. By Rev. Paul Coffin, A. M., pastor of the church in Buxton." Boston, 1799.
3. A Sermon preached in Buxton, A. D. 1802, at the Ordination of "Abner Flanders to the work of the ministry. By William Batchelder, of Berwick, preacher of the gospel." Printed in 1803, at Portsmouth, N. H. Reprinted in Portland, 1858, at the expense of Mark P. Emery.

4. Rev. Asa Rand was ordained at Gorham, January 18, 1809. Rev. Dr. Appleton, President of Bowdoin College, preached the sermon, and Rev. Paul Coffin gave the charge. The sermon and charge were printed.

5. A Sermon on Faith, Love, and Hope, preached in Saco, October 24, 1810, at the Ordination of Rev. Jonathan Cogswell. By Rev. Paul Coffin. The charge was also by Mr. Coffin. Kennebunk, 1811.

6. In a pamphlet printed by James K. Remick, Kennebunk, appear the sermons below named: —

   1. Sermon by Rev. Nathaniel H. Fletcher, at the funeral of Dr. Coffin, June 8, 1821.
   2. Sermon by Rev. Levi Loring, June 13, 1821, occasioned by the death of Dr. Coffin.
   3. The Farewell Sermon of Dr. Coffin, preached October 22, 1820.

7. "Covenants of the Congregational Church of Christ in Buxton; organized March 6, 1763." Error in date; should be March 16. Portland, 1824.

8. An Address by Rev. Levi Loring on "The Origin, Evils, and Remedy of Intemperance," delivered in Buxton, April 10, 1828. Portland, 1828.

9. Memoir of Rev. Paul Coffin, D. D., written by his son Charles, and printed March 2, 1844, in "The New World," New York, Park Benjamin, Editor.

   This has not been reprinted, but the substance of it, mostly in the language of the author, is contained in a memoir which may be found in Vol. IV. of the Collections of the Maine Historical Society. A part of the memoir appears in the Buxton Centennial volume, edited by Joel M. Marshall, Esq., and also in this book.

10. In Vol. II. of the Collections of the Maine Historical Society (1847) is an article on the Narraganset Townships by Charles Coffin, and about six pages of it is devoted to Narraganset No. 1.

11. A Centennial Address by Rev. Nathaniel West Williams, delivered in Buxton, October 17, 1850. Portland, 1850.

    This is a very creditable production by one who was but a temporary sojourner in town. There are some errors in it which are noted in the Buxton Centennial book, edited by Mr. Marshall.

12. "The Records of the Church of Christ in Buxton, Maine, during the Pastorate of Rev. Paul Coffin, D. D." Printed for Cyrus Woodman, 1868.

13. Dennett's map of Buxton, 1870. Lithographed and published, 1871. This shows the original Divisions and Lots as surveyed for the Proprietors of Narraganset No. 1. On it are printed some interesting historical memoranda.

14. Records of the Proprietors of Narraganset Township No. 1, with a Documentary Introduction and Notes by William F. Goodwin, Captain U. S. Army. Concord, N. H., 1871.

15. "Rededication of Buxton Baptist Church," at Buxton Centre. An account of it may be found in the Portland "Daily Press" of May 24, 1872.

16. "A Report of the Proceedings at the Celebration of the first Centennial Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of Buxton, Maine, held at Buxton, August 14, 1872." Edited by Joel M. Marshall, Esq.

    A notice of this celebration by Miss Louisa Titcomb was printed in the Portland "Transcript" of August 24, 1872.

17. In 1852–53 Mr. Daniel Dennett, without encouragement from any one, made a remarkable survey of Buxton. He surveyed every public road and all the exterior lines of the town, and noted the position of every dwelling-house. From the field notes of this survey he constructed a map on a scale of fifty rods to the inch. The field notes are preserved. It was an unparalleled undertaking, the offspring of rare public spirit and intelligence. It will cause his name to be held in honour as long as Buxton shall endure. This map, on a reduced scale of one hundred rods to the inch, omitting the distances marked upon the original, was lithographed and published in 1872. An interesting statement is printed upon it.

18. "Semi-Centennial of York County Conference, Buxton, Maine, June 4 and 5, 1872." By J. D. Emerson and B. P. Snow. Portland, 1876.

This handsomely printed pamphlet of 119 pages is very creditable to the Conference and to the Editors. There is an article in it by Hon. Joseph Titcomb which deserves especial commendation both for matter and style.

19. "The Woodmans of Buxton, Maine." By Cyrus Woodman. Boston, 1874.

20. "History of York County, Maine, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers. Philadelphia, Evarts and Peck, 1880. Press of J. B. Lippincott & Co."

This book was gotten up by persons living out of the State for the purpose of making money, and not from any interest in York County or from any love of historical investigation. The material for it was collected mainly from matter already in print, and the article on Buxton is of no special value.

21. "Living by The Day." A Sermon by Rev. Joseph Bartlett, with a biographical sketch of the author. Printed for private distribution. "To the Parishioners and Friends of the Rev. Joseph Bartlett, this plain and truthful sermon, which has brought comfort to some, and this brief memorial, are affectionately dedicated" by Mrs. Bartlett. January, 1883.

THE END.

POSTSCRIPT.

In the note on page 76, I have stated that the Proprietors probably procured three acres from John Cole as a meeting-house lot. This is a legitimate inference from the facts therein stated, but is nevertheless incorrect. Since this book went into the hands of the binder I have discovered that when Hancock conveyed the meeting-house lot to a Committee of the Proprietors, the same Committee, on the same day, conveyed to him a strip of land eight rods by sixty, lying along the whole southwesterly boundary of Lot 2 of Range E, in the Second Division; and, consequently, that this is the three acres referred to in the inventory of his estate.

I add a little to the Bibliography on page 91. I have learned within a few days that Mr. Coffin delivered the charge at the ordination of Rev. Jeremiah Noyes, in 1803, and that it was printed, together with the sermon preached by Mr. Miltimore. I have reason to believe that his ~~charge~~ sermon at the installation of Rev. John Tompson at South Berwick, in 1783, was also printed.

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